

## Parliament to open session Nov. 28

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree will be issued Nov. 28 summoning Parliament for an ordinary session on the same day, Information Minister Nasser Judeh said Saturday. The Parliament session will be inaugurated by a Speech from the Throne by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent. Judeh told reporters, Prince Hassan will be presenting the Speech from the Throne for the first time due to His Majesty King Hussein's absence. The King is now receiving treatment at the Mayo Clinic in the U.S. The Cabinet, holding a regular meeting yesterday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, reviewed the draft speech. The speech will then be sent to Prince Hassan who will outline the government's policies and plans.

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## King, Mubarak exchange views

WASHINGTON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday received a telephone call from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak who inquired about the King's health. President Mubarak wished King Hussein continued good health. The King and President Mubarak reviewed the latest developments in the peace process, voicing their satisfaction for the implementation of the Wye accord. The two leaders stressed the need for pushing the peace process forward in order to reach a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

## Israeli release of thieves violates accord — PNA

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — In the latest tangle in the land-for-security accord, the Palestinians said Saturday that they did not consider 150 criminals released by Israel as part of those detainees to be freed under the agreement.

The Palestinians said they protested to the United States over "a violation of the accord" since Israel released on Friday mostly car thieves and drug dealers and only 100 prisoners accused in the struggle against Israeli occupation.

Palestinian police continued on Saturday to move into the 9.1 per cent of the West Bank they received a day earlier but the latest disagreement threatened to jeopardise the release of 500 more Palestinian prisoners.

Under the U.S.-brokered Wye memorandum signed last month, Israel is slated to withdraw from a total of 13 per cent of the West Bank by the end of January in tandem with Palestinian steps against anti-Israeli activity.

The pullbacks in three phases will grant the Palestinians partial or total control over 40 per cent of the area.

"We didn't go to Wye River to use the services of [U.S. President Bill] Clinton to release car thieves," said Ahmad Tibi, a senior aide to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. "This is not fair and shows bad intentions."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in response that the peace

## Netanyahu: No release of political prisoners

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday rejected out of hand Palestinian calls for the release of 150 political prisoners and warned the Palestinians not to have any illusions that Israel's position on the matter would change. "We wouldn't free baby-killers and bomb-planters for anything in the world, especially shortly after they've committed their crimes," Netanyahu told reporters here. "I advise the Palestinians not to hold any illusions on the matter," he said, adding that the Jewish state would not release any prisoners "implicated in murders" or "belonging to Islamist groups."

accord did not stipulate that Israel free prisoners with Jewish "blood on their hands."

In completing the transfer of the territory, Palestinian police entered on Saturday seven of the 36 villages located between the cities of Jenin and Nablus.

Only a smattering of residents in the farming communities showed up to welcome the police who had already operated unofficially in much of the area.

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## UNSCOM teams pay their first surprise visit since October

—Agencies

U.N. INSPECTORS paid an announced visit to a suspected weapons site on Saturday, the first such visit since Iraq blocked their work completely on Oct. 31.

The official Iraqi News Agency said that a missile team "made a surprise visit to an establishment to check the monthly declaration of its output."

The agency did not identify the site, but the report suggested the facility was a previously identified, potential weapons site.

"The Iraqi side has provided all necessary assistance," the agency said, quoting General Hussam Mohammed Amin, head of the National Monitoring Authority, which provides escorts for the U.N. inspectors.

The U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) has refused to talk to reporters about its inspections since it resumed work Wednesday.

The inspectors returned the previous day from Bahrain, where they were evacuated after the United States threatened missile strikes.

But surprise inspections have always been the most contentious issue between UNSCOM and Iraq. On Aug. 3, Iraq refused to provide escorts for such missions, but allowed U.N. inspectors to go to previously declared sites to continue monitoring work. On Oct. 31, Iraq halted all UNSCOM visits.

The National Monitoring Authority said teams from the UNSCOM and the Inter-

national Atomic Energy Agency visited a number of sites on Saturday to check equipment. These visits were presumed to concern cameras and sensors installed to monitor activity.

Amin also said an American U-2 plane "violated Iraqi skies many times on Saturday," the agency reported.

The U-2 jets are used for aerial surveillance by the U.N. inspectors.

Meanwhile, it emerged that Iraq appeared to be reluctant to fulfil UNSCOM's latest request for documents, less than a week after the United States cancelled its planned attack.

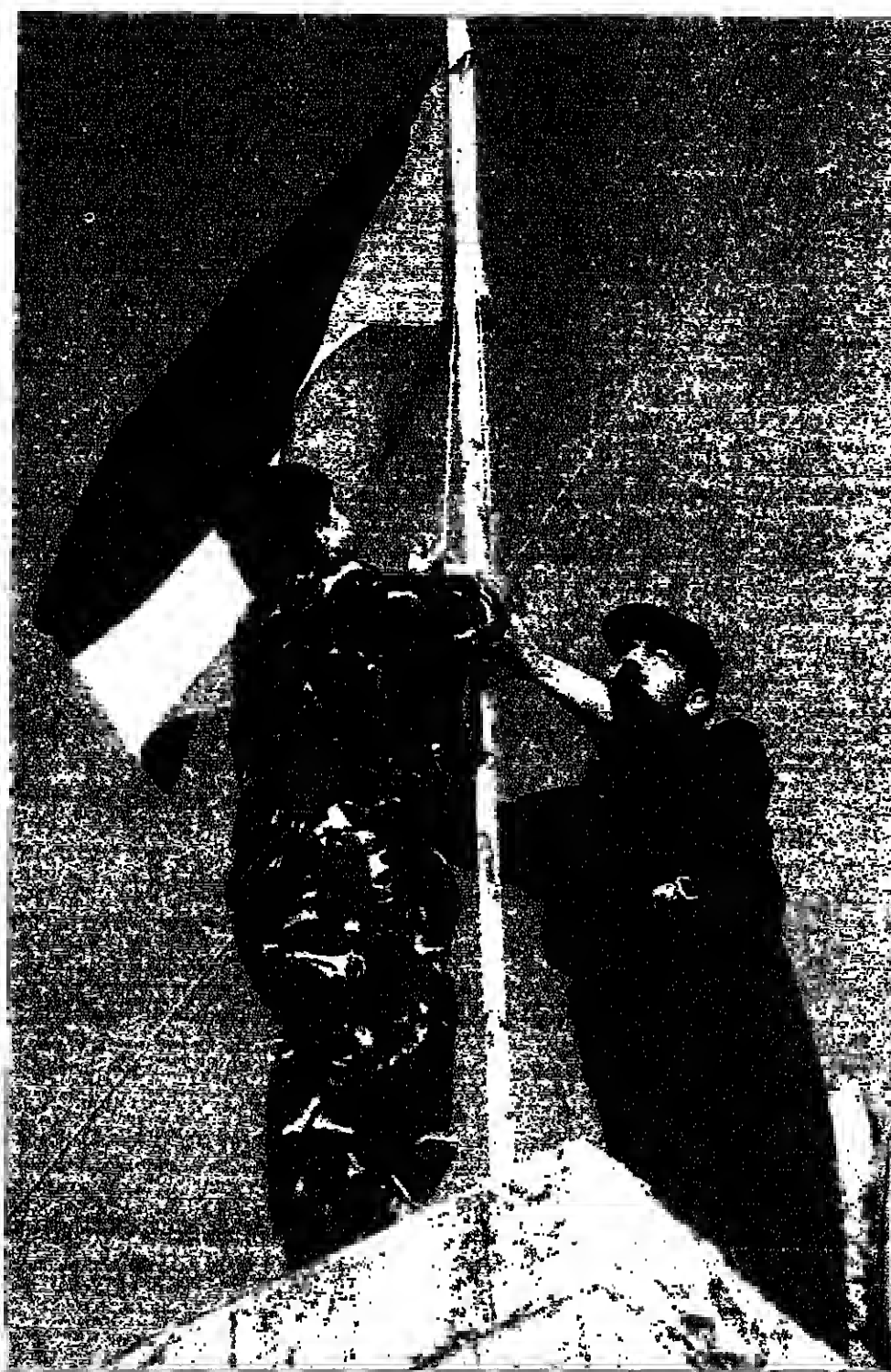
The United States and Britain had intended to strike to force Baghdad to reverse its Oct. 31 decision. On Nov. 14, Iraq agreed to allow inspections to resume in a statement that pledged full cooperation with UNSCOM.

UNSCOM chief Richard Butler promptly wrote to Baghdad asking it to hand over documents related to Iraq's chemical and biological programmes.

U.N. officials say that in reply, Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister Riyad Al Qaisi has said Butler's request "seems to be provocative rather than professional."

In Seoul, U.S. President Bill Clinton said on Saturday that he did not want to overreact to Iraq's new objections to banding over documents sought by U.N. weapons inspectors and urged Baghdad to comply.

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Palestinian security forces put up a Palestinian flag on a previously Israeli army building as they enter the village of Toubas on Saturday. Festivities were held in the village, where fireworks lit the sky and Palestinian bands marched to the cheers of the crowd following Israel's handing over of 500-square kilometres of the West Bank to the Palestinians under a U.S.-brokered land-for-security deal (Reuters photo)

## Turkey steps up Italy attack as Ocalan moved to secret location

ROME (R) — A furious row between Italy and Turkey over Rome's refusal to extradite top Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan intensified on Saturday as he was reportedly moved to a secret location in the Italian capital.

Turkey stepped up its diplomatic onslaught on its NATO ally after a Rome court rejected a Turkish arrest warrant saying Italy had "opened its arms to the world's bloodiest terrorist" and accusing it of acting "disgracefully."

The European Union backed Italy's determination to resolve its dispute with Turkey over the fate of Ocalan by legal means.

The Italian court is keeping Ocalan in Italy because Germany has a warrant out for his arrest.

Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder would discuss the fate of Ocalan when they met on Friday in Bonn, the German government said.

Ocalan heads the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and is blamed by Ankara for the deaths of some 30,000 people in a 14-year separatist campaign in southeast Turkey. He was detained in Italy on Nov. 12 on a false passport.

Ocalan was freed on Friday after Bonn, which sought him

on charges of incitement to murder involving followers in Germany, said it had no plans at present to seek his extradition.

Italy refused to extradite Ocalan to Turkey, saying that its constitution forbade it to send anyone for trial in a country where they could face the death penalty. Ocalan has applied for political asylum in Italy.

The Italian court freed Ocalan but ordered him to remain at a private address in Rome in case Germany, which has up to 40 days after his arrest to seek extradition, changed its mind.

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## Government halts sale of IPC pipelines

By Caroline Faraj

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government decided Saturday to halt all procedures related to the sale of Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) pipelines, pending the completion of investigations into the legality of the bid and studies of possible uses of the pipelines. Minister of Water and Irrigation Hani Mulki announced after an ordinary Cabinet session.

The government also decided to form two technical committees to check on the present conditions of the pipelines in the northern and southern parts of the Kingdom.

"As of Sunday (today), we'll form two technical committees that would independently study the present conditions of the pipelines both in the northern part and (the southern city of) Aqaba," Mulki said, adding that Minister of Trade and Industry Mohammad Saleh Hourani and Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi were asked to take immediate action to stop exporting any parts of the pipelines.

Mulki also referred to studies conducted to determine the feasibility of using the IPC pipelines in oil and water projects.

"We'll go through all the studies that were made in the early 1990s for the possible use of the pipelines, and also the current condition of the pipelines that were used in the early 1950s and 1960s in water projects," Mulki added.

The minister also said the government will investigate all bidding procedures that took place last July, in order to make sure of all legalities.

The government, he said, was prompted to take these decisions by the fact that the contractor who won the bid took parts of another pipeline that was not included in the bid.

On his part, Minister of Information Nasser Judeh said the government will show no reluctance in taking the necessary measures to safeguard public interests.

Earlier Saturday, three Lower House of Parliament members urged the government to halt the sale of 50 kilometres of 12-inch pipelines and 60 kilometres of 16-inch pipelines worth JD250,000.

The deputies said after visiting the site of the pipeline that the welded steel and dactyl pipes were still fit for use, and raised concern over certain technicalities involving the sale of the pipes to a businessperson, Akram Amin

Abu Amr, who won the bid on July 20, 1998.

"The whole process of the sale was legal. A special committee was formed to supervise the sale, an advertisement to tender the sale was placed in three local dailies, and the bid was won by the highest of the three bidders," a government official told the Jordan Times earlier in the day.

A file containing official documents and various inter-governmental correspondence that took place up to the date of sale was also made available to the Jordan Times by the Ministry of Water.

The pipeline, linking Iraq's northern Karkuk oil refinery with one on the Mediterranean city of Haifa via Jordan, was totally shut down after the 1948 war that led to Israel's creation.

It was initially built by a British company in the early 1930s for the IPC.

In a minor Jordanian-Israeli border demarcation in the early 1980s, Amman was eventually given additional parts of the pipeline which passed through the new areas.

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## Jordan, Syria open talks on Yarmouk River water sharing

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — Jordan and Syria on Saturday agreed to avoid measures that might jeopardise plans to build the Wihdeh Dam on the Yarmouk River. Water Minister Hani Mulki said Saturday.

Commenting on the deliberations of a joint Jordanian-Syrian committee which opened its two-day meetings in Amman earlier Saturday, Mulki said "the dam is of vital importance for both sides."

But he warned against increasing the number of ditches on the Yarmouk tributaries in Syrian territory.

Jordan has often complained that it is only getting a fraction of its water share because Syria has set up more than 30 ditches and pumping facilities to store water along the Yarmouk, whose flow has fallen from 470 million cubic metres (mcm) to 270 mcm per year in the Adassiyeh border area.

"If such construction works stop, the project would be feasible," Mulki told reporters following a regular Cabinet session.

He said that "one of the most essential issues that the Jordanian side stressed in its presentation during the first meeting is the importance of getting high-quality water from the river."

According to the minister, the only obstacle facing the project is "securing funds" for the JD283 million dam, which would have a storage capacity of 225 mcm.

Nevertheless, some officials believe dormant political tension between the two countries over their regional roles and Israeli reservations over the project pending a regional settlement have undermined progress to set up the dam.

The committee, headed by Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Dureid Mahasneh and Syria's Ministry of Water and Irrigation Secretary General Barakat Hadid, discussed ways of better utilising the Yarmouk River's water next winter and the two

countries' water shares.

In 1955, an Arab League committee on water set Jordan's annual share of the river's water at 330 mcm and 90 mcm for Syria, which currently gets 220 mcm per year.

The meeting is the fourth since October 1997, when both sides agreed to go ahead with plans to construct the dam in accordance with a 1987 agreement between the two countries.

Local newspapers recently quoted a senior Jordanian official as saying "the quality of the Yarmouk's water coming to Jordan has markedly deteriorated" because wastewater was leaking into the river's tributaries in Syria.

But University of Jordan professor and water expert Elias Salameh said tests conducted on the river's water showed that its quality is "better than Lake Tiberias' water, for example."

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## Medical report in Sri Lankan maid case expected within two days

By Rana Hussein and Amy Henderson

AMMAN — Forensic doctors expect to issue their final medical report in two days concerning a 21-year-old domestic helper admitted to the hospital last Tuesday.

"Our final forensic conclusions will depend on a neurosurgical, toxicological and gynaecological consultation in addition to her medical status evaluation," said Hani Jahshan of the National Institute of Forensic Medicine.

Officials at the Sri Lankan embassy said the woman was scheduled to undergo a brain-scan yesterday evening, the first in the battery of forensic tests.

Supramaniam Kanagarani, a Sri Lankan national, was admitted to Al Bashir Hospital after the daughter of her employer dumped her on her "agent's" lawn after complaining to the agent that the woman was "sick" and asking the agent to seek medical attention for the woman.

The woman has so far either been

unable or unwilling to speak, except for one or two words at a time, since she was recovered from the agent's home, and therefore, both the embassy and hospital doctors have had difficulty identifying the cause of numerous lesions on most of the woman's body including her face. They also do not know the last time the woman, now severely underweight, was allowed food, nor can they account for the unusual swelling of the woman's hands and feet, which can be a result of malnutrition or of having been bound.

Doctors at Al Bashir, citing doctor-patient confidentiality said last Wednesday that they were not at liberty to discuss the woman's health, although embassy officials told the Jordan Times that doctors had indicated the woman had suffered severe neglect, malnutrition and abuse, and that some of the infectious injuries may be two or three months old.

Embassy officials said yesterday that during a forensic examination, initiated four days after the woman's

admission to hospital, doctors found additional bruises on both the woman's stomach and back.

"Our forensic consultation initiated four days after her admission showed infected lesions in her face, trunk and extremities which could be a consequence of trauma or possible burns," Jahshan told the Jordan Times yesterday. "Some of the lesions are highly suggestive of being of a traumatic nature."

However, he said that the injuries could not have been accidental or self-inflicted.

The embassy of Sri Lanka will file a case with the criminal prosecutor and lodge a complaint at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pending the conclusion of the forensic report.

The embassy has stopped short of accusing the woman's employer, resident in the Shmeisani district of Amman, of abusing the woman, but told the Jordan Times last week that the family had been "blacklisted" by the embassy for nearly a year, meaning that it would not allow a Sri Lankan coming to Jordan through

official channels to work for that particular family. The embassy said that there are now five cases raised against the family by the immigration department for failing to pay workers their salaries and for failing to pay for their work permits. A senior embassy official said he believes that the family continues to contract maids under false names.

However, officials said they had no prior knowledge of physical abuse of any maids in the household.

Yesterday at the hospital, embassy officials again attempted to interview the woman about her condition, but refused to speak. But when officials asked her if she was afraid to speak, she nodded her head, yes.

According to Hani Kokash, general manager of Kokash Enterprises for Trading Services, the agency that brought the woman to Amman, Kanagarani has been employed in the household since Nov. 1, 1997.

During an interview with the Jordan Times, he said that after the woman was left at his household, he

attempted to speak with the employer, but was only able to reach the employer's daughter. "I demanded to know what was wrong with the [woman], and she replied that the family had called a doctor to the house who told them that the woman was suffering from cancer and had given her a shot, which explained her near paralysis," he said, "which does not really explain all the [injuries] that look like burns to me."

He said that the woman has not been paid her salary for an entire year and has no working papers, a situation that Sri Lankan domestic servants say is a typical scenario.

Since the embassy was established two years ago in response to a harrowing case that involved the trafficking of Sri Lankan babies to Europe, the embassy has recorded that approximately 30 Sri Lankans have died while employed in Jordan, embassy officials said yesterday. The causes of death include accidents and suicides, and in one case, murder, an official said.







## Water official on trial files lawsuit over job suspension

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — One of the nine government officials on trial for their roles in last summer's water-contamination crisis has filed a lawsuit against Water Minister Hani Mulki, demanding that he be reinstated in his job, his attorney said Saturday.

Hatem Shahin said Ahmad Oleimat, head of the quality control department at the Water Authority, decided to file a lawsuit at the Supreme Court "contesting the legality of the minister's decision to suspend his employment as a government employee until a final ruling is issued by the Criminal Court."

Court officials said the case was officially registered last week.

"In our point of view, the decision is illegal," Shahin told the Jordan Times.

He declined to elaborate on the legal terms used in the petition.

Oleimat and eight other water officials, including Water Authority Secretary General Munther Khleifat, face several charges including forgery, complicity in forgery, negligence and failure to investigate the quality of water supplied by the Zai Water Treatment Plant, which was at the heart of the crisis.

Other defendants who face the same charges include Khleifat's technical assistant, Samir Hejazin, the head of the authority's central laboratories, Hassan Juma, Zai plant Director Mohammad Abu Taha, the head of water treatment and operations at the plant, Riyad Muhsein, the head of the plant's maintenance department, Munaser Hikmat, the director of the plant's shifts department, Hish Radwan, and Salt lab health expert Mohammad Ghannam.

Residents of western Amman complained in July of foul-smelling and discoloured water, supplied mostly by the Zai plant.

The crisis led to the resignation of Water Minister Munther Haddadin.

The prosecution charge sheet cited several reasons that led to the water crisis, including failure to hire a specialised "micro-biological technician, incompetence, lack of advanced laboratories that could detect sources of pollution and negligence in maintaining the plant's filtering system.

The next court session is scheduled for Nov. 24.



AGRICULTURE MINISTER OPENS SEMINAR: Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha opens a seminar in Tafleh held in conjunction with UNRWA on the sustainable development of remote areas. More than 22 representatives from the Ministry of Social Development, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and other parties attended the seminar (Petra photo)

## Ministry, council reach agreement on Christian education classes

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Education has reached an agreement with the Council of Christian Bishops in the Kingdom to offer Christian education classes beginning in December.

Father Hanna Jallouf from Terra Sancta College, the coordinator of the council's educational relations with the ministry, told the Jordan Times that Christian students in government schools will be required to attend Christian education classes in their own districts once a week at private schools. The districts include Salt, Fuhais, Irbid, Huson, Karak, Ajloun and Madaba, he added.

Each class will last 45 minutes, and students must attend

three classes a week, according to Jallouf, who noted that religious education will be compulsory for all Christian students.

The Christian education plan is a trial and will be introduced to all districts, including Amman, if it proves successful, said Jallouf.

A decision to offer religious education to Christian students in government schools, which now offer only Islamic education, was taken by the government almost two years ago but implementation was delayed due to technicalities, he added.

Jallouf said the Council of Bishops, whose members represent the various Christian communities in Jordan, decided to teach a Christian curriculum similar to the Syrian model since no appropriate

educational books are currently available. The books will be distributed free of charge, he said.

The council has recruited a number of qualified Christian instructors to teach from the third grade to the secondary level, but the teachers will be paid by the Ministry of Education, said Jallouf.

Noting that there are an estimated 3,000 Christian students in government schools, Jallouf said the council has provided the ministry with the names of the selected teachers and the schools at which classes will be held.

Jallouf said he expected that a Jordanian syllabus would be ready in two years, adding that a special committee has been created to prepare the educational programme.

## Health ministry committee examines slander allegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Health Ministry has formed a special committee to investigate an alleged case of slander against a group of nurses by an official at Prince Faisal Hospital, a Jordan Nursing Association official said Saturday.

A group of nurses filed a complaint with the association about the director of the government-run hospital, whom they claim used derogatory language in describing the nature of their

job, said Munir Akel, secretary general of the association. Ministry officials confirmed that such a committee was formed but declined further comment until investigations are completed.

According to Akel, Health Minister Na'el Ajlouni pledged to look into the situation.

"The association has postponed filing a court case against the director of the hospital until the ministerial committee submits its report,"

Akel said, adding that the findings of the report will determine what action the association will pursue.

The investigation panel is headed by Azmi Hadidi, head of the Inspection and Control Department at the ministry, and is expected to submit its report to the Health Ministry by Monday.

Akel has called on the government to suspend the hospital director from work pending the results of the investigation.

## Royal Jordanian makes first flight to Palestinian airport on Tuesday

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian will make its first flight to the Palestinian National Authority's new Dahaniya Airport in the Gaza Strip during its official inauguration on Tuesday.

According to Jasser Ziyayd, director of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), an RJ Airbus-320 will carry an official delegation headed by Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi.

Ziyayd said the CAA reached an agreement with Palestine Airlines to operate at least one flight to Gaza per day. The agreement is expected to be signed soon, he added.

The aviation official stressed that the first com-

mercial flight to Dahaniya, which will be operated by Royal Wings, Jordan's regional airline, is expected in the coming six weeks.

"The airport needs a few more weeks to prepare for commercial flights," Ziyayd told the Jordan Times.

Ziyayd added that commercial flights to Gaza will also transport cargo.

The inauguration of Dahaniya Airport, which was delayed several months, was one of the provisions of the Wye River accord signed between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel earlier last month.

The agreement calls for, among other things, the opening of the Dahaniya Airport and a safe passage

route between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The operation of a Palestinian airport will facilitate the travel of Palestinian citizens, especially PNA officials, whose movement is hindered due to continuous closures of the Palestinian territories by Israel.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat was forced to use the Egyptian airport of Aerech in the Sinai Peninsula for international travel because the Israeli authorities refused to allow him to use the Dahaniya Airport.

Ziyayd said Israel was not involved with the aviation agreement with the Palestinians, adding that "Jordan is dealing with the Palestinian side only in this regard."

## 'UNRWA donor nations expected to make contributions by month's end' Funding to be used to cover employees' November salaries

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency announced Saturday that its donor nations will make financial contributions by the end of November to enable the agency to pay its employees' salaries.

An agency official was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that UNRWA lacks sufficient cash to pay the employees thanks to a delay on the part of the donor nations in transferring funds.

A report in the Arabic daily Al Aswaq on Saturday quoted an UNRWA source in Gaza as saying that the agency would not be able to

pay its employees for November due to liquidity problems and lack of sufficient reserves in its 1998 budget.

But an official at the agency's headquarters in Amman told Petra that the agency had been notified that it would receive funding for the salaries before the end of the month.

According to the UNRWA official, the situation has become very critical for the agency, whose 1998 budget amounts to \$314 million, of which only \$255 million has been secured from the donor nations.

The agency's budget is short by \$59 million, but UNRWA's administration

has been able to overcome this deficit by restructuring the management and by cutting down on expenses, the UNRWA official said. But he added that the agency has no allocations to handle a similar crisis should it occur in the future.

According to the UNRWA official, the agency will not be able to pursue its operations and provide educational, social and health services to the refugees in its five fields of operation while its budget remains in the red.

The UNRWA official said a meeting of more than 30 of the agency's donor nations is due to be held in New York early next month

in order to determine the amount each country will contribute and to find a solution to the recurring deficits.

An earlier agency announcement said the donor nations' meeting, which will be attended by UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen, was expected on Dec. 2-3.

UNRWA offers services to more than 3.5 million Palestinian refugees, including 1.4 million in Jordan alone. In the Kingdom, the agency operates 24 health centres and 198 schools and offers social services to residents of refugee camps in coordination with the government.

## Training workshop for forest rangers opens Monday

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature on Monday will hold a one-day workshop in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture to train forest rangers to protect Jordan's natural resources more effectively.

The RSCN has already held several workshops in Salt and the Jordan Valley and has plans to hold more in Madaba, Zarqa and other areas.

In September, the two parties formed a partnership to implement more conservation policies, including a fieldwork mechanism to protect the Kingdom's wildlife.

The ministry's role in the partnership will include providing rangers to help carry out field programmes

and patrols to ensure enforcement of conservation laws, especially in hunting areas, and conducting joint public awareness campaigns.

Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha in September called for decisive legal and financial steps to stop the depletion of natural resources in order to protect Jordan from encroaching desertification and biodiversity degradation.

Jordan, which signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora in 1979, has authorised the ministry and the society to

take charge of wildlife conservation.

Responsible for protecting the Kingdom's natural resources, wildlife and wild areas, the non-governmental RSCN, formed in 1966 and operating under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein, manages six nature reserves and has plans to set up another seven.

The society is a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the World Wide Fund for Nature and other international environmental bodies. It is also the Middle East representative of BirdLife International.

## Government halts sale of IPC pipelines

(Continued from page 1)

However, most of the main pipes in the Iraq-Haifa oil link were removed during the 1950s and 1960s for use in several projects to secure domestic water supplies, leaving other sections of the underground pipeline to decay, officials said.

The average durability of buried pipes is estimated by officials at 25 to 30 years, a main reason that prompted

the government to consider selling parts of the defunct network in November 1996, officials said.

But deputies Salameh Hani, Ali Abu Rbeitha and Mahmoud Kharabshah were quoted by a local daily on Saturday as saying that workers on the site told them that the life span of the pipelines stood at 100 years.

"We demand that the government stop the sale immediately, form a specialised

technical committee and ask the British manufacturer to submit a detailed report on the condition of the pipes to fix the network and reoperate it," the paper quoted them as saying.

They also claimed that several rusty pieces of pipes presented to them by the government to justify the sale turned out to be parts of the outer shale protecting the actual pipes.

Abu Amr himself was

apparently unhappy over the terms of the sale.

In a letter sent to the head of the Jordan Water Authority, dated Aug. 10, Abu Amr said several pipeline components listed in the official bid were not found due to the fact that no maps were available.

The IPC issue will be discussed on Tuesday by the Lower House's energy committee, to be attended by Mulki.

## Israeli release of thieves violates accord — PNA

(Continued from page 1)

But in the village of Tubas, the police jeeps were escorted by scout troops playing drums and onlookers waving red, green, white and black Palestinian flags.

The withdrawal isolated several Jewish settlements and Israeli troops began reinforcing them. In Ganim, a community of 51 families, many were thinking about leaving.

"If this place turns into an armed camp, it's not the way we wanted to live," said Ilan Amar, who sells car paint in the Israeli port city of Haifa.

The Palestinian cabinet called on Israel in a meeting overnight to abide by the Wye memorandum and cease Jewish settlement activity in the occupied West Bank.

Israeli settlers, who oppose the land-for-peace deal with the Palestinians, have been trying to take as many West Bank hilltops to prevent them from being handed over in the future.

A statement from the Palestinian cabinet said "settlements would destroy the peace process, stability and security."

Israeli soldiers were slated Saturday night and Sunday to complete the demarcation of the borders of those areas transferred to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Israeli media reported.

Arafat told reporters in Gaza Saturday that the withdrawal was "a good beginning in the implementation of what was agreed upon." The Palestinian leader sent congratulations on Friday to those residents now under his authority and asked that they "raise the Palestinian flag." By late January, Israel is to have carried out two more pullbacks under the Wye River agreement, awarding Arafat joint or sole jurisdiction over 2,382-square kilometres.

Apparently as part of a Palestinian crackdown on anti-Israeli extremists, Palestinian police arrested on Saturday Ismail Haniya, a leader in the Islamic activist group, Hamas, relatives said.

Since the signing of the accord, Palestinian police have arrested hundreds of members of Hamas, which opposes the peace process and has taken responsibility for several deadly attacks on Israelis.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### FILMS

"Immortal Beloved" at the Books @ Café, Jabal Amman, First Circle at 8:30 p.m. (Tel. 4650457).  
"La vie est un long fleuve tranquille" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, on Monday Nov. 23 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

### LECTURE

"Jordanian-German Cooperation in Archaeological Excavations" by Dr. Zeidan Kafafi at Goethe-Institut, Jabal Amman, on Monday, Nov. 23 at 6:00 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

Paintings by Farouq Hassan at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uthayma (Tel. 5526932), until Nov. 29.  
Photography exhibition entitled "Windows and Doors" by Hani Hourani at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Dec. 18.  
Display of Jordan River Foundation (JRF) 1998 autumn/winter collection entitled "Falling Leaves" at the JRF showroom, Jabal Amman (Tel. 4613081), until Nov. 30.  
Crossroads of Civilisations: More Than 100 Years of German Archaeological Activities in Jordan (sponsored by the German Protestant Institute in cooperation with Petra Store Preservation) at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Nov. 28.  
Exhibition of watercolours by Mukarram Haghondouga at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 24.  
Paintings by Jordanian artist Mobammad Abu Aziz at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 28.

## UNSCOM teams pay their 1st surprise visit since October

(Continued from page 1)

Making his first comment on two letters that Iraq sent to the chief U.N. weapons inspector objecting to the request for the papers, Clinton did not threaten to use force against Baghdad if it fails to cooperate as he often has in recent weeks.

"I think it's important that we not overreact here on the first day. I want to make sure I know exactly what the facts are," Clinton told reporters at a news conference with South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung.

"I hope that Iraq would

comply as it said it would... just a few days ago with letter and spirit of the U.N. resolutions and give them the information they seek," Clinton added.

Clinton called off U.S. air strikes against Iraq last week when Baghdad reversed an earlier decision and announced that it would cooperate fully with the (UNSCOM) searching for suspected Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

U.S. National Security Adviser Sandy Berger told reporters later on Saturday that the United States was

still ready to take military action if Iraq failed to cooperate with the inspectors.

"Clearly in our judgement Iraq has an obligation to produce the documents that UNSCOM is seeking and we will support UNSCOM in that effort," he said.

"The issue here is whether Iraq will meet its obligations... and whether UNSCOM is able to do its work," Berger said.

"If we reach the conclusion that the answer to those questions is negative, we obviously are prepared to act."

On Friday, Iraq raised a

string of objections to a request by Butler for documents about its prohibited arms programmes, calling his action "provocative" and unprofessional.

It was Iraq's first comment on such requests since the U.N. weapons inspectors returned to Baghdad this week after Iraq, under threat of military action by the United States and Britain, said it was resuming cooperation with U.N. teams.

Clinton made clear that he was solidly behind Butler in the dispute, pointedly praising him as a "professional."



# U.S., S. Korea warn North over nuclear, missile proliferation

SEOUL (AFP) — Presidents Bill Clinton and Kim Dae-Jung Saturday vowed to pursue a struggle to draw North Korea out of its volatile isolation, but warned they would not tolerate its nuclear or missile programmes.

After a summit meeting here dominated by fears over a suspected underground nuclear complex and reports that the North is preparing to step up its missile development, the U.S. and South Korean leaders appealed to Pyongyang not to push the region into crisis.

At the start of a weekend state visit Clinton declared himself "deeply concerned" about the suspect facility, which Pyongyang has refused to unconditionally open for inspections, and over its rocket programme.

"We have made it clear to Pyongyang that it must satisfy our concerns and that further provocations will threaten progress we have made," Clinton said referring to boosted U.S.-Pyongyang diplomatic and military contacts.

He cautioned that while he backed Kim's conciliatory "Sunshine Policy" of engaging the North economically, Washington would be forced to be more confrontational in the face of further North Korean "provocations."

The North on Aug. 31 launched a medium range Taepo-Dong, which it said was a satellite delivery vehicle, causing alarm in Washington, Tokyo and Seoul over its ballistic capabilities.

"President Kim and I continue to support an approach that is a clear-eyed mix of diplomacy ... and deterrence against North Korean aggression through our

defence cooperation," he said.

"I hope the North Koreans will not do anything to force us to change our policy," he stressed after the 150-minute summit which saw the allies reaffirm their military alliance and harmonise their approach towards North Korea.

President Kim cautioned North Korea it would face a firm rebuff if it fails to ally fears the underground site, near its declared nuclear facility at Yongyon, is being used to reprocess nuclear material.

"We made it clear we will not tolerate any possible attempt by North Korea to proliferate nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction," President Kim told a press conference.

"We agreed that all necessary steps should be taken to clarify the purpose and character of the underground site through full access," Kim said.

Both presidents pledged to make every effort to ensure a crucial 1994 deal under which Pyongyang agreed to freeze its nuclear programme remained intact despite the latest furor.

North Korea, in talks this week with Clinton's special Korea envoy Charles Kartman demanded up to \$300 million to allow access to the suspicious site which was spotted by U.S. surveillance. Clinton has rejected the demand.

The two presidents appeared to be in full agreement over the handling of the crisis after an earlier rift over the issue evaporated.

The shift came when Kartman, who had warned the 1994 nuclear deal was at risk, suddenly backed away from earlier claims there was "compelling evidence" the suspect site was a

nuclear facility — a stance Seoul objected to.

Clinton also vowed that the "unshakeable alliance" between Seoul and Washington — under which 37,000 U.S. troops are stationed here — would continue and urged Pyongyang to respect its commitments under the 1994 nuclear pact.

North Korea however slammed the "imperialist" U.S. military presence here.

The U.S. president urged the North to give up its nuclear hriukmanship and missile sales in favour of the potentially more lucrative fruits of Kim's Sunshine Policy, which he described as an "historic opportunity."

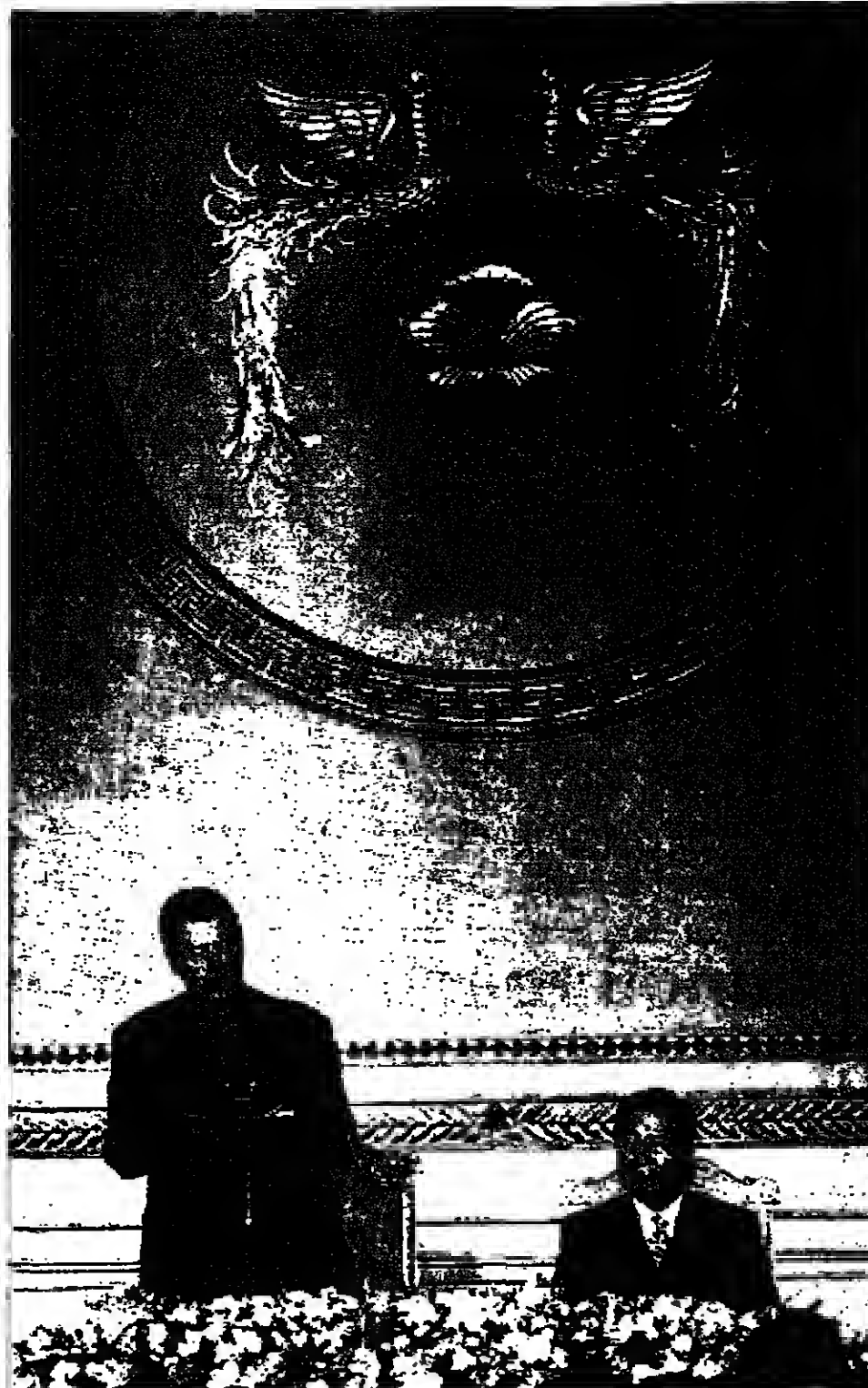
A Seoul corporation this week launched the first tours in 50 years between the two Koreas when a ship full of South Korean tourists arrived in the North.

"Nothing could ever be put into that hole in the ground (underground facility) ... that would give North Korea as much advantage, as much power, as much wealth as much happiness, as more of those ships are going up there," Clinton said.

Clinton also praised Kim's quest for democracy and his economic reform efforts, but urged a more rapid pace of restructuring while expressing concern about alleged unfair South Korean trade practices, notably steel dumping.

After the summit, Clinton took part in talks with U.S. and Korean businessmen and civic leaders during which he urged Seoul's top conglomerates to cooperate with reform efforts.

He later attended a state dinner, ahead of a day of visiting U.S. military installations and troops here Sunday.



United States President Bill Clinton delivers his speech as South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung listens during a state dinner. Clinton held talks with the South Korean President earlier during the day, focusing on their engagement policy with North Korea and Kim's programmes to rebuild an economy shattered by the Asian economic crisis (Reuters photo)

## Tobacco settlement eases only one of industry's problems

NEW YORK (AP) — Attorneys general for U.S. states say the fight against Big Tobacco will continue even as they drop their claims for health care reimbursements in a historic \$206 billion settlement.

"Most people now realise the war against tobacco won't be won in one decisive engagement," Christine Gregoire, Washington attorney general and leader of the state oecoditors, said Friday.

She said the states would now encourage Congress to tighten the reins on the tobacco industry by, among other things, giving the Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate tobacco as a drug.

The 46 U.S. states that hadn't already settled with the industry unanimously supported the agreement that was negotiated with the tobacco companies over the past five months. The companies said they would sign it Monday.

Cigarette prices are expected to rise 35 cents to 40 cents a pack to pay for the settlement, the biggest payout ever in the history of U.S. civil cases.

The settlement resolves one big threat to the beleaguered tobacco industry, but other battles lie ahead.

Tobacco companies still face individual and class-action lawsuits by smokers and their families, health insurance

providers and union health plans.

The justice department is reportedly conducting a criminal investigation into whether the industry misled Congress about tobacco's dangers.

Anti-smoking advocates were unhappy that the deal extracted fewer concessions from the industry than a broader \$368.5 billion agreement reached in 1997 that later died in Congress.

"The deal concedes far too much to Big Tobacco and provides far too little to protect public health," American Lung Association chief executive John Garrison said.

For state attorneys general, the choice was to take the deal with the billions of dollars that would come with it or fight the tobacco companies in court for a better deal while risking the chance of losing.

"The issue for me is whether we could win more in court in this case than is currently on the table," said New Mexico Attorney General Tom Udall.

"The answer is easy. We could not." Under the deal, the tobacco company payments will be distributed to the states over 25 years, beginning no later than July 2000, and will also help finance anti-smoking research and education programmes.

The companies also will give up billboard advertising, car-

toons in ads, branded merchandise sales and other marketing tactics that critics say makes smoking more appealing to children. The tobacco billboard ban will come down by April.

Public health advocates vowed to fight in the state legislatures to make sure the money goes to public health and tobacco control efforts.

"If the tobacco companies think for one minute this is going to buy them any peace in Massachusetts, they are sadly mistaken," said Lori Fresina, spokeswoman for the Massachusetts chapter of the American Cancer Society.

The tobacco companies who negotiated the settlement are Philip Morris Cos., R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp. and the Lorillard Tobacco Co.

A fifth smaller company, Liggett Group Inc., was a late addition to the settlement. Liggett was the first tobacco company to settle with the states but it could have suffered financially if it were left out of the new agreement.

Four states — Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi and Texas — had reached settlements for a combined \$40 billion before this proposal was created for the remaining 46 states.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### German foreign minister asks NATO to rethink nuclear strategy

BERLIN (AFP) — German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer wants NATO to reconsider its first-use nuclear strategy, he says in an interview with Der Spiegel to appear Monday. "The situation in terms of security policy has been fundamentally transformed" and this should be "discussed openly within the Atlantic alliance." NATO's current strategy, he said, allows use of nuclear weapons in a first instance. "I told the secretary general of the alliance, Javier Solana, that we wanted to talk about this because we see things differently," said Fischer, a leader of the Greens Party in the coalition government. Germany, he said, is now "surrounded by friends" and there are no longer "armoured divisions on its interior frontier that could push through to the English Channel in 48 hours." NATO is due to adopt a new strategic nuclear plan at its summit in Washington next April. Fischer also called in the interview for the creation of a second chamber in European Parliament. "Freely elected national parliaments rather than governments could name delegates to this chamber," he said. "National political elites would thus be associated with Europe," with the result being a "real European representation."

### Illegal immigrants set to protest in several French cities

PARIS (AP) — Illegal immigrants were to take to the streets Saturday in several French cities, asking that the French government give them residency status. Afternoon protests were planned for Paris, as well as Orleans, Le Havre, Bordeaux and Lille. About forty anti-racism groups, several labour unions and members of the Greens party were to march with the illegal immigrants. The planned protests were seen as a test of a movement that began in 1996 with a two-month-long occupation of a Paris church by 300 African illegal immigrants. The Socialist-led French government has legalised the status of some 76,000 illegal immigrants but has rejected residency requested for more than 64,000 others. The Greens, represented by Environment Minister Dominique Voynet, have called for the government to provide residency status for all illegal immigrants, who in French are called "sans papiers" or those without papers. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin has been more generous in granting residency permits to illegal immigrants than the previous conservative government. But the far right National Front, which blames high unemployment on immigrants, has accused Jospin of being too soft on the issue.

### Three dead, 34 hospitalised in food poisoning at Japan's nursing home

TOKYO (AFP) — Food poisoning at a nursing home in Japan left three dead and 34 hospitalised as residents ate meals infected with O-157 colon bacillus, municipal health officials said Saturday. Health officials in Yamaguchi prefecture said two residents died in hospital Saturday in the small town of Fuse. Another resident died Thursday, the officials said. "We have detected O-157 in the meals served at the nursing home, but we cannot yet determine the source of infection," said an official at the southern prefecture's health department. The official said 33 residents and one of the nursing home's staff had been hospitalised. About 20 of them had not shown any symptoms, but they were hospitalised for disinfection, the official said. The bacillus was believed to be present in meals served Monday when some residents began complaining of diarrhoea, the official said.

### Sweden arrests armed man who sought meeting with premier

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish police arrested a man armed with a gun who had gone to the office of Prime Minister Goran Persson to seek a meeting, the daily Aftonbladet reported Saturday. The 40-year-old man, whose identity was not disclosed in accordance with Swedish law, was arrested after placing an unloaded gun on the reception counter after he was asked to wait. Police charged him with carrying an unauthorised weapon. A few days earlier, the man had written to Persson asking for assistance after losing custody of a daughter. Swedish authorities have been particularly gun-shy since the 1986 assassination of Prime Minister Olof Palme, who was shot dead in a Stockholm street. The murder was never solved.

### Two-bedroom apartment sells for \$15 million

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The two bedroom penthouse apartment boasts a wraparound terrace, floor-to-ceiling windows and a spectacular view of the San Francisco Bay area. But is it really worth \$15 million? Charlton Buckley thinks so. Thursday, he purchased the apartment and all its furniture from oil heir Billy Getty. "It's one of a kind," said real estate agent Richard Weil of Hill and Co., which represented Buckley. "There's nothing like it in the world." The 24th-floor penthouse has an unparalleled 360-degree view of the bay area and is located in the tony neighbourhood of Russian Hill. Realtors say the sale makes it the most expensive home in a city with a skyrocketing housing market, eclipsing the estimated \$6 million author Danielle Steel reportedly paid for her sprawling Pacific Heights mansion. "That does appear to be the most expensive two-bedroom apartment I've ever heard of," llyce Glink, a nationally syndicated real estate columnist and book author in Chicago, said Friday. It beats the \$9.5 million billionaire David Koch reportedly paid in 1994 for Jackie Onassis' 15th-floor apartment overlooking New York's Central Park. "It's location, location, location, views, celebrity: add it all up and you've got a nice price," she said. Buckley can certainly afford it. He recently sold a string of radio stations for \$125 million.

### 15 die in cold snap in Poland

WARSAW (AFP) — Fifteen people have died in a cold snap accompanied by heavy snowfall, which has gripped Poland for the past five days, with temperatures dipping to minus 15 degrees Celsius, Radio Trojka reported Saturday. Most of the victims were men, homeless or drunks, aged 26 to 59, police said, who have made available six houses in a former barracks of the disbanded ZOMO riot police to shelter the homeless. The frozen body of a 40-year-old man who died of hypothermia was found by children on their way to school in a village in the north of the country, while another 32-year-old man was found a few hundred metres from his home in the southeast.

## Clinton says scandal caused a lot of suffering

SEOUL (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton said Saturday the sex and perjury scandal that sparked an impeachment proceeding was no longer a political or legal issue for him but a personal matter in which "there has been a lot of suffering."

At a joint news conference with South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, Clinton was asked whether he should face some kind of punishment or apology to bring the matter to closure.

"There has been a lot of suffering — that is different from punishment, although it's hard to see the difference sometimes as you're going through it," Clinton responded.

"For me, this long ago ceased to be a political issue or a legal issue and became a personal one. And every day I do my

best to put it right, personally." He said it would not be appropriate to comment on what Congress should do.

"I trust the American people, and I hope Congress will do the right thing in a non political way, if you will, to get beyond the partisanship and go on," Clinton said.

While Clinton has been half a world away in Asia meeting the leaders of Japan and South Korea, the House Judiciary Committee has been proceeding with an impeachment inquiry. The committee Thursday heard from independent counsel Kenneth Starr, whose report to Congress alleging 11 possibly impeachable offences triggered the inquiry.

Starr said during the hearing he had not found

evidence of impeachable offences by Clinton in the Whitewater land deal, the firing of the travel office staff or misuse of FBI files.

"I do believe that the long-awaited acknowledgement that there is nothing on which to proceed in the travel issue and the file issue and Whitewater is a positive thing," Clinton said at the news conference.

"I think surely it will help us to get this over with. But my only concern, as I said, is that we get this behind us and go on with the business of the country." A growing number of lawmakers said they would not support impeachment, but some have discussed some kind of punishment as an alternative.

Clinton was in South Korea as part of a five-day trip to Asia.

## Congo peace talks end with ceasefire closer

GABORONE (AFP) — Talks to convince Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) rebels to adopt a ceasefire plan ended here Saturday, with rebels and officials from a four-nation contact group saying progress had been made towards peace.

It was clear, however, that a final agreement on a ceasefire may still be weeks away, given repeated rebel demands that a ceasefire can take place only after direct negotiations with a reluctant President Laurent Kabila.

The only real move forward is a commitment that a list of rebel amendments to the ceasefire proposal — worked out in ministerial talks in Lusaka last month — be submitted to a new ministerial meeting early next month.

An official from the 14-nation

Southern African Development Community (SADC) said the ministerial meeting was likely to take place in Lusaka on Dec. 6.

Given the short timescale, much work needs to be done to achieve a meeting of minds, following accusations by the top SADC official here that the rebels had behaved "like a group of bandits."

The rebels, led by Congolese Rally for Democracy president Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, had come to the talks Saturday armed with a revised list of amendments after day-long talks Friday ended in deadlock and frustration.

The rebel amendments include a demand that there can be no ceasefire in the 16-week-old conflict without prior direct negotiations with Kabila.

Kabila has refused to meet the

rebels, insisting they are merely a front for Uganda and Rwanda, whose armies are backing the rebellion, ostensibly to further their own security concerns in the volatile region.

The rebels are further demanding that they be included as an official delegation at all future meetings, including a planned regional summit in Pretoria on Dec. 8 — when diplomats hope a ceasefire can be ratified.

Up to now the rebels have been held at arm's length, allowed only to participate in proximity talks, like those in Gaborone.

The rebels are also insisting that Sudan and Chad be added to a list of countries which are providing military support for Kabila's government forces in the DRC, joining Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

"We are closer to a ceasefire, and direct negotiations, than ever before," a smiling rebel spokesman Bizima Karaha told AFP.

The amendments were thrashed out in proximity talks involving an African contact group set up by the SADC — Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique — and the rebel team, as well as OAU and U.N. envoys.

SADC executive secretary, Kaire Mbuende conceded at a press conference that the submission would have no binding authority.

"There are proposed amendments that have been submitted to the relevant authority to look at them and discuss and take a final position on those amendments," he said.

The amendments had been reached only after "tough negotiations," he said.

"There has been forward and backward movement, but the persistent message was a commitment to peaceful settlement. From our point of view they are ready to join the peace initiative, which is already under way."

An angry Mbuende had earlier lashed out at the rebels' behaviour in comments to reporters before Saturday's delayed resumption of talks, to which the rebels arrived an hour late.

"We were terribly disappointed that we got a commitment that we thought would lead to a breakthrough and then there was a turnaround," he said of Friday night's breakdown.

"We didn't see the statesmanship that we maybe wrongly

attributed to them. They were behaving like a group of bandits," an exasperated Mbuende said. "We took these people maybe more seriously than we should have."

The four-man rebel delegation — who diplomats said often appeared to be divided among themselves — had frustrated diplomats by insisting that a ceasefire document should cite Kabila's government for genocidal acts against ethnic Tutsis in eastern DRC.

"We did advise from time to time that some of the demands will complicate the process as opposed to facilitating the process, and I think that between yesterday and today we found the conclusion and the latest demands are more facilitating," Mbuende said.

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Indonesian students shout slogans as they ride on a bus through central Jakarta. Anti-government protests have failed to gain momentum since Friday as the city stayed quiet and ousted President Suharto went fishing (Reuters photo)

## Indonesia plans new probe into Suharto wealth

JAKARTA (R) — Embattled Indonesian President B.J. Habibie will set up a new commission to investigate the wealth of ousted President Suharto, a senior official said Saturday.

State Secretary Akbar Tandjung said the commission would be formed soon after consultations with key ministers including Defence Minister General Wiranto.

"The commission will comprise people that have integrity and high credibility," Akbar told reporters.

Akbar said the probe would include charities and foundations headed by Suharto, but he did not say if it would extend to the reviled former leader's family and friends, many of whom are prominent businesspeople.

Newspapers estimated the

Suharto family amassed \$40 billion during his autocratic 32 year rule that ended in May amid widespread rioting that killed more than 1,200 people.

Students and pro-democracy protesters, who have taken to Jakarta's streets in their thousands in recent weeks, have demanded an independent investigation into the Suharto family wealth.

They say a separate probe by Attorney-General Muhammad Ghalib is a whitewash with leading opposition figure Amien Rais Thursday dismissing Ghalib as Suharto's "PR official" defending his family.

The capital was quiet Saturday, with about 700 students staging a peaceful demonstration in the city centre not far from the

green suburban house where Suharto has lived for more than 30 years.

They were prevented by heavily armed troops wielding riot shields and batons from marching to Suharto's home.

Suharto himself has gone fishing in the "Thousand Islands" chain in Jakarta bay, officials said Friday.

It is believed to be the first time Suharto has left Jakarta after handing over power in May to Habibie, his hand-picked successor.

At least another 14 people died last week in clashes between troops and protesters demanding faster and greater economic reform.

The latest round of violence was the worst since the May riots and turned the city centre into a battle zone and closed the main airport road.

Earlier Saturday, the ruling Golkar party vowed to set up an independent inquiry into the Suharto wealth.

Golkar parliamentary chief Marzuki Darusman told reporters the team should come from government and other parties who are trusted by the public and credible.

Darusman said Suharto should be immediately placed under house arrest once the inquiry team was established.

## Yeltsin vows to punish killers of reformist deputy

SAINT PETERSBURG, Russia (AFP) — The Russian interior minister Saturday took personal charge of the probe into the murder of a prominent reformist deputy, as President Boris Yeltsin vowed stiff punishment for the "insolent" killers.

Yeltsin ordered interior chief Sergei Stepashin to take "urgent measures" to bring to book gunmen who killed independent liberal deputy Galina Starovoytova late Friday with three bullets to the head.

Her parliamentary assistant Ruslan Linkov suffered two bullet wounds to the neck but doctors said he had a 70 per cent chance of surviving following a four-hour operation.

Starovoytova, 52, a former Yeltsin advisor on ethnic affairs, was the first woman politician to be assassinated in modern times, reports said.

In a letter to the speaker of parliament Yeltsin said he was "shocked and outraged to the depths of my soul" by the murder and had taken the affair under his "personal control."

"Those who ordered and carried out this insolent crime will not be able to hide," he said. In a separate telegram of condolence to the family, cited by Interfax, the president said: "Our duty

is to find and punish the killers."

Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov also condemned the attack and promised to punish those behind this latest act of "handiwork."

"The criminals will certainly be tracked down," Primakov pledged.

City public prosecutor Ivan Fedoruk refused to say whether politics had been the motive for the murder, saying: "I do not lend more credence to one (theory) over another."

Rohbery seemed unlikely, however, as investigators found \$1,700 on the deceased. The murder weapons were discarded as the crime scene.

Stepashin said a joint task force had been set up to conduct the inquiry, and that he would report to Yeltsin and Primakov later.

"I can tell you with certainty that this murder will be resolved," he told a press conference here. "The volume of activity we are currently undertaking and the composition of the investigation squads are without precedent."

Local Interfax correspondent Olga Krupenye apparently was one of the first to learn of the attack when Linkov reached her on his mobile phone just

before passing out.

"He called me in an incredible state of voice, saying Galina

Vasilyevna (Starovoytova) had just been attacked," a visibly shaken Krupenye said on state television.

"He gave me the address. I asked him how she was and he said: 'I don't know, she's lying on the landing and I'm wounded,'" before losing consciousness, she said.

A co-president of the liberal "Democratic Russia" party, Starovoytova was an outspoken opponent of Communist and nationalist parties who dominate the lower house of parliament.

She was also one of the most active opponents of Saint Petersburg governor Vladimir Yakovlev and recently took charge of a broad-based liberal coalition to challenge him in city-wide elections due Dec. 6.

Yakovlev said the murder had left him "shocked and deeply indignant." ITAR-TASS reported.

The feisty deputy was also a potential rival of Duma speaker Gennady Seleznyov, who was to run against her in Saint Petersburg in December 1999 legislative polls. Last October, a senior Seleznyov aide working on his campaign was

seriously injured in an attempted assassination here.

A town hall official who asked not to be named said: "It's not the first political murder in Saint Petersburg."

Perhaps it's linked to the fact that several democratic leaders come from our city and they create obstacles for someone."

Deputy Governor Mikhail Manevich, in charge of the city's privatisation programme, was shot dead by a sniper in August last year. The killer has not been caught.

The murder of the widely-respected Starovoytova, an outspoken opponent of the botched 1994-96 war in Chechnya, triggered a chorus of condemnation across the political spectrum and a flood of tributes.

An emotional Yegor Gaidar, a former acting premier, said

Starovoytova's democratic convictions had cost her her life.

"Democracy in Russia is possible," he told Moscow Echo radio.

"Galina Starovoytova devoted these last few years to proving this trivial fact, but which still needs to be demonstrated. It is a great shame that she had to pay for this with her life."

## Top obstetrician causes stir with ethnic theories on childbirth

PARIS (AP) — A prominent French obstetrician is making headlines for saying foetuses of black women reach term one full week before the expected delivery date for Caucasian women.

Emile Papiernik, widely regarded as France's leading obstetrician, says in "Le Passeur de Vie," (The Delivery Man), that understanding racial distinctions can help doctors save the lives of newborns delivered dangerously past their due date.

"Recognising that difference allows doctors to begin monitoring pregnant African mothers one week earlier," he said in a telephone interview.

"This can cut in half prenatal deaths, foetal distress during delivery and the neo-natal damage associated with post-term births." But with that theory, the man who opened France's first authorised abortion clinic and helped conceive the nation's first test-tube baby is causing a stir again.

"Is Papiernik Racist?" Elle magazine headlined its review.

The article concluded that he wasn't. "The ethnic ethics of Prof. Papiernik," the centre-right paper Le Figaro subtitled its article.

Papiernik, head of obstetrics at the Port-Royal Hospital in Paris, has published several articles on racial differences in pregnancy duration.

In France, about two infant deaths per 1,000 are caused by perinatal complications, meaning those that occur three months before delivery to seven days after.

"But," Papiernik says, those numbers don't include the hundreds of babies who survive, often

with lifelong handicaps and developmental delays that require long-term care.

"Is there anything more traumatic than losing a healthy baby in the days preceding or during delivery?" Papiernik says. "It can be avoided without expensive, advanced technology — just changing the attitude that all pregnancies are the same."

"It's so simple, it knocks you over!" he said. But getting out his message has not been so easy.

France's top left-leaning dailies, Le Monde and Liberation, have published nothing on the book, which Papiernik terms a "blackout."

"Racial difference is not politically correct among Socialists," he said. Liberation's science writer, Eric Favreau, said the paper had "no room for stories that didn't add anything exceptional," and Le Monde claimed it never received the book.

Papiernik says he knows firsthand about the danger of racial criteria. As a child during World War II, he narrowly escaped a roundup of Parisian Jews. His father perished at Auschwitz.

But he argues that acknowledging racial differences is the first step in achieving equality in medical care.

"As a doctor, I can tell you in numbers of lives lost about the stupidity of political correctness," he said. Papiernik points to Fort-de-France, Martinique, where he claims perinatal deaths have dropped from seven or eight per 1,000 to about four since the city's major hospitals adopted his methods.

"Papiernik's methods have been standard procedure here for years," said

Danielle Sainte-Rose, head of the Redoute Maternity Clinic at Fort-de-France's teaching hospital, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire.

"For example, if a patient is black, we let her go into labour at 36 weeks if she's ready. If she's Caucasian, we give drugs until the 37th week or longer to delay labour," she said.

But Sainte-Rose said Papiernik's method was among several factors — such as the closing of small maternity clinics and better prenatal care — that have reduced prenatal deaths.

Clinics in Singapore applying Papiernik's findings also say they have reduced prenatal deaths among babies of Indian origin, who mature earlier than babies of Chinese origin, according to medical papers Papiernik showed The Associated Press.

"Papiernik's research is very innovative and has far-reaching implications with practical applications," said Greg Alexander, Chairman of the Dept. of Maternal and Child Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Alexander, who has written several articles with Papiernik, said the findings were helping overturn commonly accepted theories of gestation formed 150 years ago on the basis of Britain's predominantly Caucasian population.

But Mouloud Aouni, a French anti-racism activist, warned that the material could be exploited outside the scientific community.

"A doctor doesn't have control over how his work is interpreted," Aouni said.

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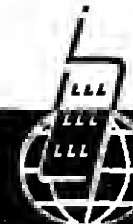
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## Extradition dilemmas

INTERNATIONAL LAW relating to extradition, as well as human rights issues, has been put into new focus over the last month, to say the least. With the Pinochet saga between Chile and the U.K. still unresolved, the detention of and a subsequent Turkish extradition request for Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), have pushed bilateral ties between two more countries, Turkey and Italy in this case, almost to the breaking point. As in the Pinochet case, the crux of the matter lies in differing views of international obligations and interpretations of the law.

Turkey is seeking Ocalan's extradition for his leading role in the Kurdish fight for a homeland in the southeastern part of the country, a conflict that has claimed anywhere from 29,000 to 37,000 lives since 1984. Although he was detained upon arrival in Rome, an Italian court ordered Ocalan's release after ruling out his extradition to Turkey. The Turkish request was turned down because the Italian constitution does not allow the extradition of suspects to countries that employ the death penalty. In addition, Italy has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which calls on state parties to reduce the application of capital punishment to the bare minimum, as well as the additional protocol which prohibits the death penalty, no matter how grave the crime.

In response to the refusal, the Turkish government and business community have started leveling threats against Italy, including boycotts and warnings of "eternal hostility." What is missing from the onslaught, unfortunately, is a consistent legal argument for the extradition request to be fulfilled. Turkey's atrocious human rights record (two Kurds reportedly died yesterday in police custody following a crackdown on PKK supporters) and concerns over Ocalan receiving a fair trial do not facilitate an extradition either.

Ocalan, nevertheless, must answer a number of questions. A U.S.-based human rights group, in an appeal to Italy to refuse Ocalan political asylum, attributed 768 extra judicial killings to the PKK carried out between 1990 and 1992. What complicates the issue for Turkey and Italy is the fact that the Kurdish leader was mounting a "struggle for liberation," which entailed acts of violence against both military personnel and civilians. Every so-called war of liberation involves violence that could be viewed as terrorism depending on the eye of the beholder.

It is obvious that there are a number of difficult issues to come to terms with in the dispute between Italy and Turkey. If the evidence warrants a trial for Ocalan, as seems the case, then he should face justice in a fair manner. On the other hand, any complicity by the Turkish army or government in the type of atrocities pinned to the PKK, which has been documented in a number of cases, should not go unpunished either. The whole issue has had at least one beneficial effect: to highlight the ongoing pattern of human rights abuses, committed by both sides, in Turkey. What seems clear, though, is that if Italy extradites Ocalan to Turkey at this point, the whole issue will drop into the shadows again, to the detriment of all parties involved.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Raja Elissa lashed out at the United States for poking its nose where it doesn't belong by interfering in other countries' internal disputes. Washington, said Elissa, announced it is aiming to remove Saddam Hussein, because he undermines human rights in his country. Washington has a long history of interfering in other states' affairs, said Elissa: former American President Ronald Reagan ordered jet fighters to strike Tripoli in a bid to kill Muammar Qadhafi, who also according to America violates human rights; the U.S. is currently involved in Malaysia's internal problems by supporting former minister Anwar Ibrahim who is in jail; in '78 Washington refused to help the Shah after the eruption of the Islamic revolution in Iran and refused to grant him political asylum. The French foreign minister, according to Elissa, criticised President Clinton for interfering in Iraq domestic problems by saying that interfering in other countries' affairs is not the policy of France. Elissa said it is the Iraqi people who decide whether they want Saddam or not, and they are capable of toppling him if they decide to.

Al Dustour's editorial commented on the latest development in the peace process between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel after the latter started the long over-due troop withdrawals from parts of the West Bank. The Wye River memorandum, recently signed between the PNA and Israel also stipulates that Israel should free Palestinian prisoners and allow the PNA to have its own airport. The paper criticised the Israeli leadership for delaying the withdrawal. Israel insists on not fulfilling its obligations: it amended the original plans for withdrawal, and it failed to release the prisoners agreed upon, claimed the paper. Such Israeli measures are grounds for observers to believe that further progress will not be easily made, said Al Dustour. The paper urged the United States to press Israel to meet its obligations.

## Sunday's Economic Review

Dr. Fahed Fanek

# How stable is Jordan?

LOOKING AT the strong points in Jordanian society and the Jordanian economy we find stability at the top of the list, especially in the literature produced by Jordanians. Looking at the weak points and prevailing risks in Jordan, on the other hand, we find instability high on the list, especially in foreign references and writings.

Is Jordan politically, socially and economically stable or unstable? It is not right to live with this contradiction — which concerns a vital property of a country — which must be resolved once and for all. Stability or lack of it is crucial to Jordan's future development, and cannot be left in the balance without a proper and definite answer.

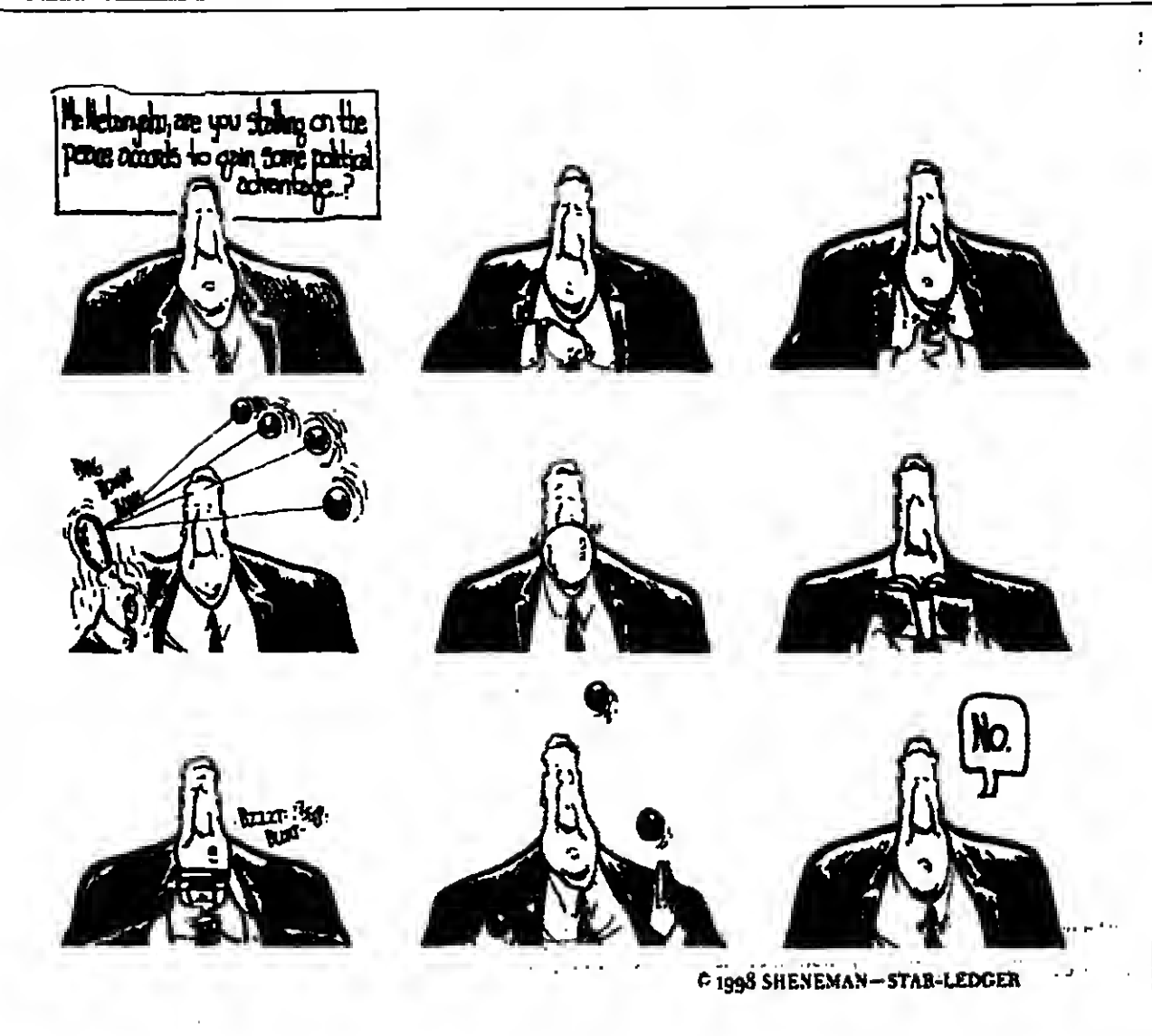
Those who claim that Jordan is stable, point out that the Jordanian state was formed over seventy five years ago to become one of the oldest contemporary Arab states in the region. The Hashemite regime is well established and has been uninterrupted. The only similarly surviving Arab regime in the Arab Peninsula is the Saudi regime.

Political stability is obvious as demonstrated by the absence of military or civilian revolutions, which has plagued most other Arab countries. Parliamentary life was practised even before formal independence was attained. The Jordanian constitution is democratic, progressive and one of the best among Arab constitutions.

Internally the situation is generally stable. Individuals are safe, violence is non-existent, private property is protected from confiscation and nationalisation as has not been the case in other places in the region. Jordan is receptive to foreigners and offer a friendly atmosphere.

On the other hand, those who claim that Jordan is unstable, point out that the political position of Jordan is in the eye of the storm of the Arab Israeli extended conflict.

The geographical position of Jordan in the Middle East is unstable and explosive. The world looks at Jordan only as part of the Middle East. Instability in the region reflects negatively on Jordan.



# Why Arab nations must have democracy?

By Pascal B. Karny

IT IS good and welcoming news that Qatar has taken steps towards democracy and is working on drafting a permanent constitution with subsequent elections for a legislative council. Qatar has already initiated proceedings for municipal councils elections, and in fact elections for a Chamber of Commerce have taken place. It has also partly lifted certain prohibitions which shackle the freedom of women.

Kuwait was a pioneer among the Gulf states in establishing democracy and pluralism. It has a democratically elected parliament, recognised pluralism of parties and has freedom of the press. It is high time that all Arab countries including the other Gulf Arab states should follow the path of democracy and pluralism of parties. Democracy is a guarantee of stability and render states less prone to military coups.

In his book "Preparing for the Twenty-First Century", the Historian Paul Kennedy writes: "Far from preparing for the twenty-first century, the Arab and Muslim World appears to have difficulty in coming to terms with the nineteenth century with its composite legacy of secularisation, democracy, laissez-faire economics, transitional industrial and commercial linkages, social change and intellectual questioning."

Some Arab writers retaliated that Paul Kennedy is not fair to the Arab and Muslim World and, typically of Western writers, is biased against it. However, the well-known Egyptian writer Dr. Faud Zakaria defended the writer, saying that he was right in his assessment of the Arab and Muslim World — the Arab World is still preoccupied with the questions we were preoccupied with in the 19th century: the women's veil, whether a woman should work or not, the onset of the moon months.

It seems then that there is a meeting of minds, but not only between Paul Kennedy and Dr. Faud Zakaria. Another member of this club is Al Sadiq Al Mahdi, a former Sudanese prime minister and a well-respected Arab Muslim leader. In answer to questions put to him by the Jineen

Centre for Strategic Studies Al Mahdi stated, inter alia, as follows: "The first problem in the Arab World is that the Arab peoples are 'colonised internally', if we consider the matter from the point of view of the division which exists in the world of Islam between Sunnis and Shiites. The reason for this division is due to the fact

*'Far from preparing for the twenty-first century, the Arab and Muslim World appears to have difficulty in coming to terms with the nineteenth century...'*

that the Shiites look for an infallible Imam while the Sunnis consider him a normal human being subject to questioning and accountability. At present the Arab governing political leaderships are like the infallible Shiite Imam who does not err, and all state organs are ready to prove his infallibility. We have no means to correct the wrong which the leader commits, and thus he acts as he wishes with no accountability for his uttering or acts."

Al Mahdi further claims that the "Israeli people have the advantage of

superior economic and military capabilities because they enjoy full freedom of choice, legal rights and enjoy competitive and creative capabilities. But the Arab peoples are deprived of those rights and privileges. How can a people whose hands are tied and shackled defeat a free people." In Mahdi's opinion the most important factor which renders the capabilities of our people stultified or ineffective is the infallibility of the political leadership and the governing of the people by "fire and iron". This is a great and substantial weakness which does not allow any lee-way for competitiveness and creativity despite the fact that we are approaching the end of the 20th century, says Al Mahdi.

From the above it is clear that democracy must be implemented in all Arab countries to enable people themselves to shape their destinies. Arab leaderships will thus become accountable for their actions, and will not be able to govern arbitrarily and despotically. It is high time for the Arabs to emulate the democracy and pluralism prevailing in European states and elsewhere. Arab leaders should listen to public opinion as may be expressed by a free media or in occasional polls. They must encourage the establishment of democracy, liberalism and respect for human rights.

It is only by such means that the Arabs can change the gloomy perceptions of the Arab World that Kennedy, Dr. Zakaria and Al Mahdi all extol. The Arabs may then achieve a bright and prosperous future, play an effective role in world political and economic affairs and renew their glorious past. Otherwise the Arab peoples will remain subservient to the more advanced liberal West, and this will consequently shape the Arab peoples' future and destiny.

Qatar will be acting wisely when it finally issues its constitution and proceeds towards the election of a democratically elected parliament.

The writer was an advocate in Palestine in 1944 and, for many years, legal officer at UNRWA headquarters in Beirut and Vienna.

## Love those trees!

To the editor:

DURING MY daily walk I keep noticing the drying of branches and the wilting of leaves on many trees planted on the pavements. It is obvious that these trees haven't been watered for a long-time. (I know we are in the autumn season, but I can assure you that I differentiate between a thirsty tree and a wilting tree nearing the end of its life). I really don't expect the Greater Amman Municipality to do all the necessary watering, but I do expect the ensconced residents of the houses and the owners of shops opposite to these "necessities of life" to make an effort and water them. What really irritates is that some of these trees are planted in front of fancy shops selling expensive items such as jewellery which means that the owners can afford to fill a bucket with water and water the trees before their shops. Alas they don't bother.

What does it take or what is needed to be done to make the people of this country love and care for trees.

Akef A. Qusous,  
Amman.

# Israel under fire for neglect of Palestinians

By Waleed Sadi

ISRAEL CAME under scrutiny last week in Geneva when its initial report on the extent of its implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights was considered by the U.N. Committee for Social, Economic and Cultural Rights for the first time ever.

The first criticism was over Israel's reluctance to become a state party to the Covenant, having ratified it only in 1992, some twenty six years after the Covenant came into force. Not only that, but Israel took more than six years to submit its initial report and try to get into step with its treaty obligations.

On the local front, the first objection raised by the Committee members was over its declared characterisation as a Jewish state. The Israeli report went out of its way to depict the country as a Jewish state, something which is anathema to international norms.

By so describing the state, Israel was found guilty of discrimination against non-Jewish groups living in the country. There is ipso facto a differential treatment being accorded to people in Israel who are not Jews.

The current government of Israel was also found to be moving to the right not only politically but economically. This was reflected in the 1997 model of the Draft Basic law in Israel which eroded economic, social and cultural rights and rendered them inferior to other rights in the country. Gender discrimination was also highlighted by the human rights experts manning the Committee.

Where Israel came under fiercest attack, though, was over the occupied territories where Israel still denies the application of the Covenant to the Palestinian areas under effective control. The Israeli delegation was told point blank that in principle the Covenant which Israel had ratified

applies not only to mainland Israel, but also to all the territories still under its functional control. Even in Area A, where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) enjoys a semblance of control, Israel still calls all the shots and pulls all the strings since these areas are in fact enclaves under the thumb of Israeli occupation. No one can enter or leave these so called self-rule areas without the direct permission of Israel itself. Until the final status talks are conducted and concluded, and sovereignty is turned over to the PNA, Israel must be viewed as the controlling power and therefore responsible for the economic, social, and cultural rights of the Palestinian people.

Israel was also drilled over the so-called ethnic bomb that it is developing, but the Israeli delegation offered no explanation, claiming that it knows nothing about the Sunday Times report.

The Israeli delegation was, furthermore, reticent over the Dimona Nuclear plant and the threat to life that it poses. Even the non-distribution of gas masks to the Palestinians drew fire from some members.

It was also suggested that the Palestinian refugees seeking repatriation and or compensation can draw support from the Covenant over and above what the U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 provides.

All in all, Israel faced a daunting experience having failed to extricate itself from its responsibilities towards the Palestinians people whether within Israel or outside it on the basis of the Covenant and other relevant humanitarian conventions.

The Palestinians would be well advised to pursue the tools being offered to them on a silver platter by the conventions that Israel has signed and ratified as they indeed offer a range of opportunities to promote Palestinian rights.



# The sound of disharmony

By Malene Jensen  
Agence France Presse

WHILE THEATRE fans flock to the Broadway revival of "The Sound of Music," the real von Trapp family on which the musical is based sings to two very different tunes off-stage.

The show depicts the early days of the now-famous family before they fled Austria to the United States in 1939, after the Nazis took over.

In the show, the cast of Trapp kids don matching sailor suits, amid the familiar tunes of "Do-Re-Mi," "Edelweiss" and "My Favorite Things."

"I don't know anything" about the real von Trapps "but the show is terrific," said a show goer one recent evening outside the Broadway theatre here.

Rich and Sandy, a couple from Colorado, said they watched the show because they loved the 1965 hit movie starring Julie Andrews as Maria von Trapp, the governess-turned-baroness who raised the 10 children of Baron Georg von Trapp.

But a few hundred kilometres from here, two factions of the real von Trapp family are entangled in a growing family feud tied to the 2,200-acre, 93-room Austrian style Trapp Family Lodge in the town of Stowe, Vermont.

A court ruling is expected soon to settle the dispute over who owns the popular luxury hillside lodge where the baroness, always in a traditional Austrian dress, kept a powerful presence during her lifetime.

After Maria's 1987 death, a rift in the once tightly knit family flared into a power

struggle over the lodge.

The fight pits Maria's grandson George — once briefly president of the lodge — against Johannes, the youngest of the von Trapp children.

George is supported by Maria's second child Eleonore von Trapp Campbell and 15 other relatives, while Johannes is supported by four siblings and other members of the extended family.

The first phase of the ownership fight ended in 1995, when the faction supporting Johannes bought the shares owned by George for \$2.56 million.

But then comes the snag: George's faction said their shares were worth almost twice the price paid — and in May 1997 a lower court in Vermont agreed.

Johannes, president of the lodge, appealed the ruling. But if the higher court upholds it, his faction could have to pay the other side some \$3 million more.

"That would be difficult," Johannes told AFP in a recent phone interview, while adding that he has "secured a commitment from a bank, so I can deal with that."

But "I might choose to sell it rather than dig out from this huge hole," he said, adding that "what it really boils down to is that they (George's faction) want money."

Donald Rendall, attorney for George's faction, meanwhile, said that the issue is about the value of company shares.

"This is not a case about greed or family strife," he said in a phone interview when reached at his office in Vermont. "But about what the fair value of those shares is."

Though the baroness is no longer there to enforce family peace her memory remains

strong in Stowe, where she is also buried.

In 1947, the same year as the baron's sudden death, Maria set up the Trapp Music Camp in what became a prelude to the lodge.

For her, "family came first," said Dave Schaefer, who now works for the Trapp family but remembers meeting Maria when interviewing her years back as a young reporter.

She was "a very strong woman who held that family together through incredible upheaval and adversity," he said.

Johannes agrees, noting that if his mother was alive she would most likely say: "Children. Stop fighting. Be sensible. This is stupid."

Maria, whose 1949 book on The Trapp Family Singers became the basis of the Broadway show and Oscar winning movie, is often credited for keeping the family afloat when arriving almost penniless in the United States, though people who knew her say that she was no Julie Andrews. "She was a bit of a bully," said a family friend, who spoke on condition of anonymity, adding that she would "drive around in a little MG and you'd better get off the road."

Meanwhile, Harlan Slayton, neighbour to the famous family when they moved to Stowe in the early 1940s, remembers the von Trapp children well, of which six are still alive.

"The girls had to work pretty hard," he said, remembering seeing them walking up and down the hill from the music camp to their home "carrying boxes of things."

"The family worked hard to get where they got."



The von Trapps, Hollywood style. Real life has proved less idyllic (file photo)

## Culture

# Monet makes the world go 'round

By Leslie Gevitz  
Reuters

FORGET ABOUT the image of a starving artist. Instead think French Impressionism, water lilies, powerful brush strokes, brilliant colour — Claude Monet dishware.

The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston is hosting "Monet in the 20th Century," an extraordinary exhibit spanning the last 26 years of the artist's life. In addition to bringing together more than 80 works of art from British, French, Japanese, Russian and U.S. museums, the MFA has brought marketing techniques from Madison Avenue.

The man who turned water lilies into wads of cash would probably approve of the umbrellas, scarves, ties, handbags, pins, earrings, necklaces, posters and stationery on sale at the MFA's gift shop conveniently located at the exhibit's exit.

To those relatively common tourist tokens, the MFA is adding dishware, vases, urns, stained glass pieces, bottle corks and, for children, stuffed lily pads and frogs.

"What is a lily pad without a frog?" one sales clerk asked.

Both are sold separately. Some of his Impressionist colleagues such as Picasso accused Monet of mass-producing art for commercial reasons. But looking at 24 of the water lily canvases, half the number Monet painted between 1903 and 1908, one sees the evolution, not the commercialisation, of an

By 1900, when he was 60, Monet was a man free of material want. He earned 213,000 francs that year at a time when a Parisian manual labourer's annual wage was about 1,000 francs.

In 1909, he was selling his pictures for 30,000 francs. In 1998, Sotheby's sold one for more than \$30 million.

The lily pond that is almost a Monet trademark and the gardens surrounding it in his Giverny, France, home were maintained by five full-time workers.

Monet's wealth came not only from his success as an artist but also his acumen as a stock investor, according to University of Massachusetts Professor Paul Hayes Tucker, who helped organise the exhibit. It is the MFA's sincere hope that at least some of the commercial success of this Impressionist artist will rub off.

In between discussing the ethereal qualities of Monet's Houses of Parliament series and the artist's fascination with winter light, MFA director Malcolm Rogers talked of expanding the museum's audience: its membership and the costs of mounting such an exhibition.

Boston-based Fleet Financial Group Inc. provided \$1.2 million to sponsor the exhibit, the largest single sponsorship gift in the museum's 122-year history. "But, of course, an exhibit like this costs many millions more," Rogers said.

The exhibition will move in January to London's Royal Academy of Arts, and Rogers said the limited number of venues adds to the cost. But, while shying from

the term "blockbuster" exhibit, he clearly hopes attendance for Monet will equal or top the 250,000 visitors who came to see a retrospective of fashion photographer Herb Ritts' work two years ago.

"Attendance" is always a variable. One can never be sure," he said. A somewhat esoteric exhibit on "1,000 Years of Chinese Painting" brought in 125,000 visitors.

The MFA ran deficits in the six years prior to Rogers' appointment four years ago. He has been able to turn that around by a combination of staff layoffs, increased admission fees and extending the museum's hours.

"We will be reporting another surplus this year," he said.

It will be the third year in a row of surpluses. To help ensure Monet will generate money, the MFA has also joined with AMTRAK, the U.S. passenger rail service, and 20 area hotels to offer Monet "Get Away" packages.

There is an advertising campaign that includes buses bathed in the water lily motif, banners hanging from street lamps heralding the show. And in high-tech Boston, where the information superhighway is often in better shape than the normal roads, Fleet has created an interactive Web site (www.fleet.com/monet) in addition to the MFA's own Web site (www.mfa.org).

To paraphrase Fred Ebb's lyrics from the hit show "Cabaret," the MFA hopes Monet will make the world go 'round.

**Book Review**  
In the House of Silence: Autobiographical Essays by Arab Women Writers  
edited by Fadia Faqir  
England, Garnet Publishing, 1998  
181 pages, £8.95

OVER THE past two decades a significant new impetus has made its mark on the literary scene. Whereas Arab women have been writing fiction since the mid-19th century (and perhaps, in secret, long before), this appeared sporadically. Since the early 1980s, however, scores of Arab women have published full-blown novels.

A Jordanian, Fadia Faqir, herself a writer and lecturer in Arabic literature at Durham University, U.K., has been active in promoting these books and having a number of them published in English. With Arab women's literature asserting itself as a trend in its own right, she took the next step, compiling essays by 13 Arab women novelists on the connection between their lives and writing. The result, "In the House of Silence," offers intriguing insights into the lives and thoughts of the once 'silent' Arab woman, as well as into the genre of autobiography.

"Most contributors to this volume wrote their texts to negotiate a textual, sexual, linguistic space for themselves within a culture which is predominantly male-dominated," writes Faqir, noting the double jeopardy involved in being a woman and a dissident (p. 6). Two of the contributors, Salwa Bakr and Nawal El-Saadawi, both Egyptian, have been imprisoned. Others faced varying degrees of punishment and social censure, for the very act of writing in public, and thus violating traditional norms that banish women to the private sphere. The double jeopardy of living in an authoritarian state and conservative social milieu imposes a degree of self-censorship. Still, many of the authors confront

# Out from the 'House of Silence' Is there an Arab women's language?

important issues head-on, particularly the relation between the personal, the literary and the political. In the process, they employ provocative new imagery, which raises the question of whether there is an Arab women's language.

For Liana Badr, writing was a way of making sense of the Palestinian experience. In her life, the mirror evolved from being a symbol of the forbidden and an invitation to madness, into a search for self. Finally, it provided the title and imagery for her novel about the siege of Tel el-Za'tar, "The Eye of the Mirror", leading her to conclude: "Isn't the mirror a world opposite the world, one that gives us an immense capacity for struggling, wrestling and facing challenges?" (p. 32).

A somewhat different angle is presented by Salwa Bakr, who turned to writing to vent her frustration with failed politics and traditional marriage — only to find in it her "real existence." Writing enabled her to demolish preconceived ideas and to concentrate on "humanity in all its forms," including "crushed human beings whom nobody seems to care about" (p. 37). What began as an escape from politics in the narrow sense, grew into a new, perhaps much deeper, type of political commitment.

Even more explicit are a few of the writers who deal with politics obliquely, in the socio-psychological realm. To the Lebanese novelist, Hoda Barakat, writing is a challenge not only to the status quo, but to the writer's very identity: "I write also because I want to resemble no person or thing, but to go deeper within myself... I step outside my gender, outside any gender. It seems to me that the act of writing is out of the ordinary, beyond the conditioning and characteristics of male and female social behaviour. Or it is at the junction of this restrictive division into male and female and full of

elation arising from the blending of the genders and the resulting ambiguity" (p. 45).

The theme of fear is addressed by Iraqi writer Alia Mamdouh, as it exists in the family and society at large, in its dual nature of poison and motivation for writing: "Our Arab fear appears to be a multi-headed monster feeding on the poison which stems from our conditioning to submit, to fragment and to keep it all to ourselves." In this context, the writer's role is to break out of the cycle of fear and strive for freedom. Mamdouh urges her fellow writers to: "Go on excavating with both bitterness and compassion even if it does not yet mean anything. But here you are, doing a job which will bring your brethren back to reality and open up their hearts while you are growing ever closer to the self you are longing to find" (p. 69).

Also included in this book are essays by women from Algeria, Syria, Tunisia and Bahrain. Each has its own theme and style, but all share an approach that is exploratory, evocative and suggestive, rather than didactic. The narratives are also full of gaps that leave much room for interpretation. Is this the result of self-censorship and repressive conditioning, or is it indicative of a new women's language revealing a previously unspoken link between the public and the private? Do these gaps indicate a lack of finesse and

maturity, or do they consciously promote creativity by challenging the reader to interpret them?

Faqir surmises that it is too early to say if there is a specifically female style: "It will take a long time for the 'master narrative' of neopatriarchy to be challenged and disrupted, and for Arab women to weave a 'language' of their own, thus freeing the forces of modernisation in Arab societies" (p. 23). On the other hand, several of the authors dismiss the idea that women write differently than men; they refuse to be labelled as "women's writers" or feminists. Whatever the outcome of this debate, it is certain that these new voices — in a curious combination of vagueness and daring — are intimating a new slant on life, on society and on ourselves.

Sally Bland

# Solzhenitsyn's new memoirs take aim at West

By Agnes Dronnikov  
Agence France Presse

RUSSIAN AUTHOR Alexander Solzhenitsyn, one of the giants of anti-Soviet dissent, has given his first impressions of the West with a new book that admits his 20-year exile was marked by a "mutual lack of understanding." The work, first released in Russia, has just been published in the West in France by Fayard, the company that holds exclusive publishing rights for the Nobel laureate in all languages but Russian.

Its title, apt for the sentiments inside, is "Le grain tombe entre les meules — esquisses d'exile," which pending an official English-language version translates

loosely into "The Grain between the Grindstone — Sketches from Exile."

Now nearing 80, Solzhenitsyn moved back to Russia four years ago, a famous and well-publicised return that was crowned in another work last June, "Russia in Collapse," which is every bit as hard on post-communist Russia as his earlier works were on the Soviet era.

Born into the turmoil after the Bolshevik Revolution, Solzhenitsyn survived the Soviet gulag, a KGB assassination attempt, totalitarian oppression, internal exile and even a bout with cancer. He thought he had seen all when he was finally expelled from Russia in 1974.

He was well-known by

then, a towering moral authority, a prophetic voice from behind the Iron Curtain whose works like "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" and "Cancer Ward" had won him the Nobel Prize for Literature four years earlier. But the West turned into an incomprehensible shock, he said in the new book. "Straight from the start, misunderstanding set in between the western media and myself. We could never understand each other," he wrote.

He spent his first two years in exile in Switzerland, where he said he was harassed by an unrelenting press and photographers. Then, he said, he had to fight to make his positions understood to a media more

interested in an attention-grabbing anecdote than the content of a serious work or speech.

Solzhenitsyn conceded he was not always sure how to act after arriving in the West, when he was constantly solicited for political comment. He needed time, he said, to understand that his work, his historical and literary writings, were most important to him.

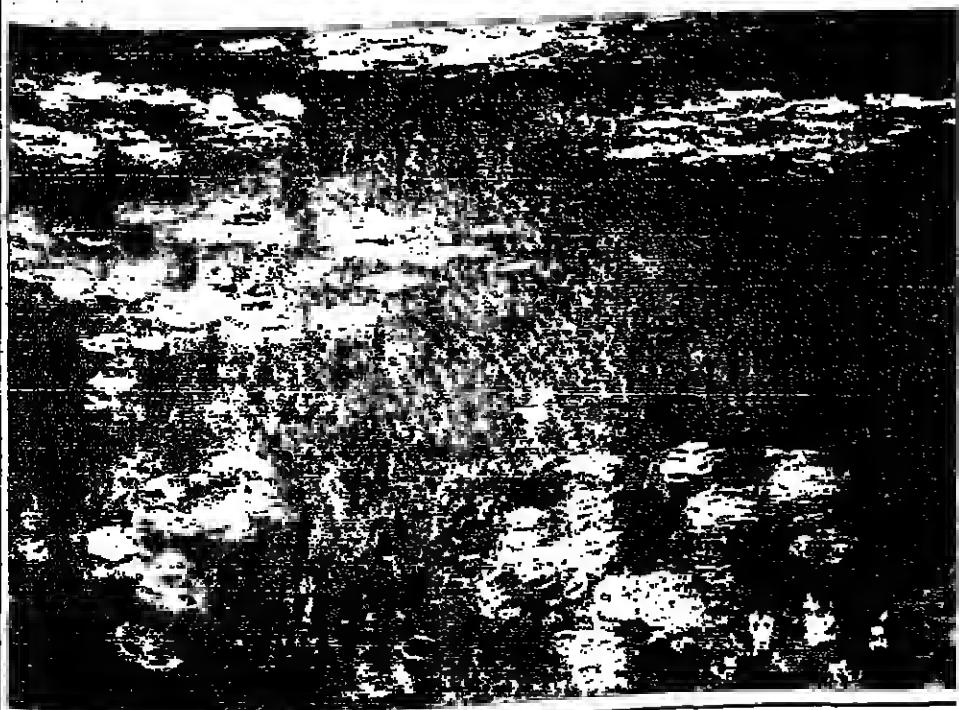
He listed stages in the progression of what he calls his "mutual lack of understanding" with the West, including much-criticised speeches in which he railed about the West in general and the United States in particular.

He recounted his family's difficulties in finding a place to settle out of the limelight

where he could continue writing, finally opting for a remote village in the north-eastern U.S. state of Vermont.

He also evoked what he says were KGB attempts to discredit him, his financial problems and publishing woes over copyright contracts, notably for "The Gulag Archipelago," which he insisted he had turned over completely to a Russian social fund for former Soviet political prisoners.

The book recounted his travels in Europe and his meetings with many noted personalities, but throughout is the certainty, as of 1978, that one day he would return to his beloved Russia and that communism would collapse.



Water lilies — a nice little earner (file photo)



## Jordanian pharmaceutical exports seen rising in '99

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's pharmaceutical exports last year earned the Kingdom \$167 million, up from \$28 million in 1990 and the exports are bound to increase in the coming year when four newly established factories start production, according to Maher Matalqah, secretary general of the Jordanian Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries.

Matalqah said Saturday that exports of drug industries account for 12 per cent of the Kingdom's total annual exports and are considered the second largest foreign currency earner after the phosphates.

Capital invested in the Jordanian pharmaceutical industries is estimated at \$400 million and exports have markets in 35 countries including Europe and America.

According to Matalqah, the existing 13 factories, which employ 3,500 workers, cover 35 per cent of the Jordanian market needs.

"These industries were behind the emergence of other firms and the creation of job opportunities in the plastic industry as well as packaging and packing," he emphasised.

## World Bank water mapping plan aims to aid farmers

WASHINGTON (R) — A World Bank affiliate has unveiled a computerised mapping system of the earth's water resources with hopes it will help farmers in poor nations gauge when and where to plant crops.

The World Bank's Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) said its "world water and climate atlas" offers enhanced detail on temperature, precipitation and other factors affecting agricultural planning.

The programme is funded by World Bank nations, led by the United States and Japan. Ismail Serageldin, CGIAR chairman, and a World Bank vice president, said the programme depends on participating nations transferring agriculture information to the programme, letting farmers zero in on their region and extract key water and climate data visually.

"As surface water is fully utilised in the semi-arid regions of Asia, the Middle East and Africa, including some of the major bread baskets of the world, the ground-water table is falling at an alarming rate," CGIAR said in a statement.

The mapping system would be able to help alleviate the problem of wasted irrigation, since historical precipitation and weather trends would allow planting cycles to change to better use scarce supplies.

The World Bank said development experts believe water scarcity, not shortage of land, is likely to be the main constraint to agricultural production in developing countries.

More than one billion people live in dry regions. The World Bank said it is feared that by 2025 these areas won't have enough water to maintain 1990 per capita food output.

## Moroccan WTO candidate says helping poor urgent

GENEVA (R) — Morocco's former Trade Minister Hassan Abouyoub, bidding to become next chief of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), said one of its most urgent tasks was to help poor countries benefit from free trade.

He also told ambassadors to the Geneva-based body that it had to act "to dispel the still fairly wide perception that we operate like some secret society."

In the world's current complex economic reality, Abouyoub declared, "we cannot afford to forget the urgent need to reverse the marginalisation of large sections of the world from the advantages of the multilateral trading system."

"Indeed, I consider addressing this need as one of the most urgent tasks facing us," he stressed.

Abouyoub was the last, and at 46 the youngest, of four candidates to take over next May from outgoing Director General Renato Ruggiero to present their ideas on how they would run the WTO to trade envoys over the past three days.

The others were former prime minister of New Zealand, Michael Moore, ex-Canadian Trade Minister Roy MacLennan and Thailand's First Deputy Prime Minister Supachai Panitchpakdi.

A decision on Ruggiero's successor, to be taken by consensus among the 132 member-countries, is expected in the next few weeks, but diplomats said there were no obvious front-runners after this week's appearances.

"All four candidates gave very good presentations and did very well on the give-and-take," U.S. Ambassador Rita Hayes told reporters.

She said Washington, which in 1994 came out early for then Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari but finally had to climb down after a bruising battle with the European Union, had a "very open mind" and was looking at all four.

Abouyoub, his country's top negotiator during the 1986-93 Uruguay round of global trade talks which ended with creation of the WTO, said his experience at home in winning support for economic liberalisation gave him good credentials to lead the WTO into the next century.

The next director general will also have to play a key role in creating the agenda for a new set of global negotiations to be launched at the end of next year at the body's third ministerial meeting in the United States.

Exchange Rates Saturday, 21-11-98											
ACCESS 464888											
CURRENCY	JORDAN	USA	EURO	UK	FRANCE	GERMANY	ITALY	SPAIN	NETHERLANDS	SWITZERLAND	OTHER
JORDAN DINAR	1.0000	0.1857	0.1927	1.8779	1.8360	0.1944	2.3382	0.2076	0.7080		
SAUDI RYAL	5.2380	1.0000	1.0212	9.9491	9.7429	1.0000	12.3877	1.1000	3.7510		
BAHRAIN DINAR	5.1861	0.8793	1.0000	9.7427	8.5408	1.0087	12.1308	1.0772	3.6732		
QATAR RYAL	0.5438	0.1026	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	1.0067	1.2719	0.1129	0.3850		
LIBANON LIRA	5.1435	0.8708	0.9914	8.6589	8.4587	1.0000	12.0284	1.0679	3.8416		
YEMEN RYAL	0.4277	0.0807	0.0824	0.8031	0.7885	0.8632	1.0000	0.8688	0.3029		
EGYPT POUND	4.8154	0.9091	0.9283	9.0446	8.9571	9.6384	11.2618	1.0000	3.4100		
ISRAELI SHEQEL	21.4831	0.4549	0.4722	2.6234	2.5974	0.2746	3.3025	0.2933	1.0000		
US DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2958	0.3048	4.3427	4.3066	4.1767	50.2312	4.4804	15.2100		
BRITISH POUND	0.8527	0.1509	0.1543	1.6012	1.5680	1.6158	1.9937	1.0770	0.6037		
GERMAN MARK	2.3905	0.4512	0.4608	4.4892	4.3981	0.4848	5.5895	0.4963	1.6925		
SWITZERLAND FRA	1.9589	0.3718	0.3765	3.6974	3.6208	0.3828	4.8037	0.4088	1.3940		
FRANCE FRANC	6.0162	1.1511	1.1541	15.0536	14.7416	1.5685	18.7434	1.6644	5.6755		
JAPAN YEN	1.7006	0.3210	0.3278	3.1936	3.1273	0.3306	3.9762	0.3531	1.2040		
HOLLAND GUILDER	2.8942	0.5085	0.5183	5.0894	4.9565	0.5338	6.6825	0.5655	1.9176		
SWEDEN KRONA	11.4385	2.1582	2.2048	21.4621	21.0369	2.2241	26.7477	2.3751	0.6962		
ITALY LIRA	23.8692	4.4878	4.5822	44.4480	43.8268	4.6018	55.3428	4.8143	16.7578		
BELEM FRANK	49.1907	0.9247	0.9414	92.3744	90.4557	9.5837	115.0165	10.7132	34.8270		
AUSTRALIA DOLLA	2.1854	0.4127	0.4214	4.1058	4.0207	0.4251	5.1122	0.4540	1.5480		
GREEK DRACHMA	4.0081	0.7565	0.7725	7.5267	7.3705	0.7782	9.3715	0.8322	2.8377		
CYPRUS POUND	2.8782	0.5403	0.5548	5.4050	5.2930	0.5666	6.7299	0.5878	2.0378		
AUSTRIA SELLING	18.7924	3.1666	3.2347	31.5341	31.0904	3.1744	39.7471	3.3115	11.8800		
CANADA DOLLAR	1.2115	0.2234	0.2343	2.2876	2.2553	0.2362	2.9421	0.2524	0.8477		
EURO	1.2155	0.2234	0.2343	2.2876	2.2553	0.2362	2.9421	0.2524	0.8477		

MAJOR CURRENCIES AGAINST JORDAN DINAR											
CURRENCY	JORDAN	USA	EURO	UK	FRANCE	GERMANY	ITALY	SPAIN	NETHERLANDS	SWITZERLAND	OTHER
US DOLLAR	1.0000	1.8556	0.5808	0.7174	0.1782	0.6308	0.5242	0.5974	1.1820		
BRITISH POUND	0.8527	1.0000	0.3867	0.4331	0.1064	0.3165	0.3024	0.3024	0.7015		
GERMAN MARK	1.8625	2.2036	1.0000	1.2141	0.2862	1.4057	1.0988	1.0988	1.5687		
SWITZERLAND FRA	1.3940	2.3062	0.8238	1.0000	0.2458	1.1978	0.7308	0.7308	1.6188		
FRANCE FRANC	5.6755	6.4015	3.3533	4.0714	1.0000	4.7139	2.9754	2.9754	8.5849		
JAPAN YEN	120.4000	189.4408	71.1374	86.5702	21.2140	1.0000	63.1193	71.6714	139.8048		
HOLLAND GUILDER	1.9075	3.1568	1.1270	1.3884	0.3381	1.5843	1.0000	1.1262	2.2165		
SWEDEN KRONA	8.0882	13.4183	4.7853	5.8100	1.4270	6.7289	2.2480	2.4839	9.4113		
ITALY LIRA	18.7578	27.7583	6.9012	12.0214	2.9527	13.9184	6.7852	1.0000	19.4726		
BELEM FRANK	34.8270	57.9609	26.5773	24.5625	6.1584	28.6261	18.7879	20.7556	40.6890		
AUSTRALIA DOLLA	1.5480	2.5642	0.9146	1.1105	0.2727	1.2687	0.8115	0.8115	1.7886		
GREEK DRACHMA	2.8377	4.7007	1.8798	2.0357	0.5000	2.3589	1.4877	1.4877	3.2974		
CYPRUS POUND	2.0378	3.3756	1.2040	1.4818	0.3591	1.6625	1.0000	1.0000	2.1603		
AUSTRIA SELLING	11.8800	19.9941	7.0245	9.7287	3.1934	34.7324	6.7239	7.2421	14.1111		
CANADA DOLLAR	0.8477	1.4396	0.5305	0.6173	0.1516	0.7145	0.4512	0.4512	1.0000		
EURO	0.8477	1.4396	0.5305	0.6173	0.1516	0.7145	0.4512	0.4512	1.0000		

WORLD STOCK MARKETS											
STOCK MARKET	INDEX	CLOSING	LAST	CHANGE	PRECIOUS METALS	INITIAL	ASK	BID			
FRANKFURT	DAX	4811.88	4788.89	118.10	GOLD	258.30	258.40	258.20			
HONG KONG	HANG SENG	10233.30	10213.30	79.94	SILVER	4.80	4.80	4.80			
LONDON	FTSE 100	5717.50	5698.20	111.30	PLATINUM	355.50	357.50				
NEW YORK	DJ INDUSE	9158.50	9058.00	100.50							
NEW YORK	NYSE COMPOSITE	572.00	568.75	3.25							
NEW YORK	AMEX COMPOSITE	875.91	873.22	2.69							
NEW YORK	S&P 500	1163.50	1163.51	0.01							
NEW YORK	NYSE-200	14779.84	14364.40	415.44							
PARIS	CAC 40	3802.70	3708.78	85.94							
FRANKFURT	COMPOSITE	4808.00	4788.89	119.10							

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**YOUNG ARTISTS AT THE HOTEL INTER-CONTINENTAL JORDAN**

A DRAWING competition organised by the Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan took place last week. Three Jordanian schools took part in this competition which had an environmental theme. Children between the ages of 6 to 10 years were asked to translate their vision of the world's environmental situation in the year 2000. The three schools participating were Amman National School, Modern Montessori School and Al Manhal School.

The judging committee included three teachers and three students from these schools plus a representative from Jordan Environment Society in addition to three members of the Executive Committee at the Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan. It was a very difficult task for the judging committee to choose the winning drawings.

First prize went to Marina Jouri from the Amman National School, the second prize went to Farah Yash from the Amman National School, the third went to Kader Jalal Karadan from the Modern Montessori School and the fourth went to Dina Ghassan Dodah from Al Manhal School.

The winning drawing will be used to create a seasonal greeting card for Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan. The object of this competition is to raise awareness among the young members of the community to the importance of protecting our environment.

**THE Daily Crossword** Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- 1 Secular
- 5 Way overweight
- 10 Katt of comics
- 14 Nick and Nora's pooch
- 15 Class writing
- 16 "Moonstruck" star
- 17 Bread choice
- 19 Writer
- 20 O'Flaherty
- 21 Studies lete
- 21 Husky in voice
- 23 English gentleman
- 26 Ridiculed
- 27 Sulked
- 28 Slow down, in music
- 29 Sports pages' figs
- 30 Polite
- 31 Recede
- 34 Other: Sp.
- 35 Of a unit of resistance
- 36 Hideous creature
- 37 Bon (with/cism)
- 38 Sales pitch
- 39 Shroud of
- 40 Kicks out
- 42 Serving bowl
- 43 Ward off
- 45 Shirley Jackson story, "The ..."
- 46 Capers
- 47 Reconcilable carnivore
- 48 Orchestra member
- 49 Tudor-style house feature
- 54 Complexion damage
- 55 Speak one's mind
- 56 Gardner of mysteries
- 57 Visualizee
- 58 High-strung
- 59 Napoleon

DOWN

- 1 Statue
- 2 Cigar dropping
- 3 O.J. Simpson's
- 4 Judge
- 5 Mother Teresa of
- 6 Ahead
- 7 Founder of modern
- 8 Philosophy
- 9 Nice summers?
- 10 Having a love of beauty
- 11 Cream-filled dessert
- 12 Hard
- 13 Questioning
- 14 Back comb
- 15 Packing heat
- 16 Pridy
- 17 Word of mouth
- 18 salts
- 19 voice
- 20 Pitch interval
- 21 Beelezebub
- 22 Hoarfrosts
- 23 Chef Julie
- 24 Pridy
- 25 Comic Hill
- 26 Some goale situation
- 27 Nowadays
- 28 On (as a gambler)
- 29 All, in music
- 30 Supernatural TV series
- 31 Exacty
- 32 Some broad beans
- 33 Preserved for later
- 34 Garrets
- 35 Highland group
- 36 Exot
- 37 Sister sib
- 38 Building add-on
- 39 Old-time motorcar

**Peanuts**

FOR "TRICK OR TREATS" I GOT TWELVE CANDY BARS, FOURTEEN COOKIES, AND THREE TUBES OF TOOTHPASTE

I DIDN'T GET A BICYCLE..

**Andy Capp**

TELL ME ABOUT HER, JACK

SHE'S WAITING FOR "MISTER RIGHT" TO COME ALONG

THAT'S A BIT OF LUCK

WHILE THEY'RE WAITING, THEY USUALLY SETTLE FOR "MISTER RIGHT NOW"

**Mutt'n' Jeff**

HELLO, TOOTHY

HI, YEA, BAZE!

WANTS TRUFF? JEFF LOVES WHO?

GOSH, I DUNNO

I FORGOT TO ASK HER NAME!

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"Chicken Soup for the Lactose Intolerant Soul...Chicken Soup for the Bug Collector's Soul...Chicken Soup for the Pierced and Tattooed Soul..."

**JUMBLE.** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Arghton

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VOBEA

DUIHM

CAPMIT

TEASET

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: DERBY SOUSE LAWYER HALLOW

Answer: What the proposition sounded like - A SHADY DEAL



## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Payment delays cited as main problem for strained ties between banks and contractors

**\*\* IRREGULARITIES IN payments to contractors are one of many negative factors affecting the financing of the construction sector from a banking point of view, a senior and well-known banker wrote in a study. He indicated that payment delays cause sharp deviations in cash flows and lead to further requests of credit which banks become hesitant to provide.**

Another factor cited by Mufleh Aqel, the regional director at the Arab Bank headquarters in Amman, is the mechanism of payments to the contractors which has not developed as the employer is practically still the one who decides the size and time of payment despite clear agreements in a contract between the parties.

In addition, Aqel mentioned that banks obtain no binding security because a letter from a contractor relinquishing his entitlements from an employer to the bank can be superseded by other claimants such as subcontractors or creditors who could freeze payments. "As such, the letter of transfer of entitlements is weakened as a security on which a bank can depend," he said.

Other negative factors that affect the financing of contractors are the issues of guarantees required by the employer, the difficulty in appraising the performance of work in terms of numbers, the risk of force majeure that contractors face more than others and

the limited securities that contractors can offer compared to the huge financing required.

The respected banker indicated that the banking sector has extended sufficient financing to the contracting sector noting that credits have increased between 1990 and 1994 by an average of 12 per cent. "In 1994, the growth in credit extension to the construction sector reached 33.7 per cent underlining the higher dependence of contractors on bank financing instead of local savings or foreign transfers," he said.

According to Aqel, two important elements affect the financing available to the contracting sector in the Kingdom: Funds from our individual's own resources (and this relates to invested capital and profitability) and, outside financing, which is influenced by the size of one's own resources and operation risks.

The study blamed employers for requesting guarantees that harm the interest of contractors. It cited the text of the guarantees which could negatively affect the rights of the contractors such as in the case of higher prices that could inflict big damages on the contractors. In addition, the study said, employers resort to undue pressure on the contractors by threatening to call for payment of the amount of the guarantee (Al Aswaj).

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) An older person could be rather bossy today. You like to be in control, but right now that may not be possible. If you're going to visit an older relative, show respect. As for advice and you'll get some excellent coaching. You could gain quite a bit from this interaction, but only if you manage your mouth in a responsible manner.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) If you've made long-term commitments recently, you may be having second thoughts. Your freedom seems very important to you all of a sudden. Don't worry. This is a natural sorting out phase. During the coming month, you and your sweetheart or partner will be discussing what needs to be worked and getting on the same wavelength.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) The sun is joining Venus. Pluto and retrograde Mercury in Sagittarius today. Sagittarius symbolises the truth. This is hitting in your solar seventh house of partnerships, so your partner could start telling you everything he or she has kept repressed. Not to worry. This is good for a relationship, although it can be kind of a challenge. **CANCER:** (June 22 to July 22) You might feel like there's too much work, and it's making you nervous. You want to think about something else, but your mind keeps going back to a problem that happened at the workplace, or one you're afraid will happen there. Think it out ahead of time. The more you can work out now, the easier it'll be.

**LEO:** (July 23 to August 23) This is a marvellous day for love. There will be some work involved, but it looks like the overall consensus is in favour of a huge celebration. If you don't already have a party planned, no problem. The people you most want to party with are the ones closest to you anyway. You probably don't even have to call them.

**VIRGO:** (August 23 to September 23) Looks like quite a commotion at home. You want to take action, and what you have in mind is big, bold and dramatic, and you've thought about it long enough. You have to take action now, so go ahead. Don't do it all by yourself, though. Enrol your whole family in helping. It'll make this a lot more fun.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 23) You're smarter than usual, and you're focusing and expressing yourself clearly. Before you wax eloquent, however, go over the facts one more time, just to make sure you haven't missed something. Don't believe something just because it's presented in a forceful manner. Check out all of the references before you quote them.

**SCORPIO:** (October 24 to November 21) You may not have reached that buried treasure yet, or if you have, perhaps there are a couple of other places to dig. Not a bad weekend for cleaning out the closets. No telling what treasures you'll find. If you come up with enough, a garage sale would be an excellent idea. You could wind up with your holiday gifts paid for!

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) It's hard for you to sit still. There are so many things you want to do. And with a little help from a friend, you might be able to accomplish most of them. That's the friend who helps you stay on schedule, by the way. Your tendency to be easily distracted is your worst enemy right now.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 19) You'll find it easy to get your way, because you're clear about what you want and able to communicate it. There are distractions, however. Your biggest problem today will be veering off course when you're trying to get something done. Take a minute to listen to what someone's trying to tell you. You'll save yourself time in the long run.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 20 to February 18) The sun is in Sagittarius now, which is absolutely marvellous for you. Sagittarius is your solar eleventh house of friends and group activities. This is a good time to be working with a whole group of people on something that benefits others. You'd be using current conditions to the max, and having a great time.

**PISCES:** (February 19 to March 20) It might be difficult to find time for your friends today. It looks like an authority figure wants to order you around. It's the same old problem. Just do what this person wants. Do it quickly, accurately and cheerfully, then ask if you can go out and play. Then get going, while you have the chance.

Birth Stone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

## Cement deal brightens AFM outlook

By Tareq Ayyoub

**AMMAN** — The sale of 33.3 per cent of the government equity in the Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC) at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) Saturday reflected positively on the prices of most of the shares on the floor, a broker said Saturday.

The broker said the JD72 million deal between the government and the French firm Lafarge at the rate of JD3,600 per share was concluded on the floor despite the suspension of trading on the JCFC shares. Nor-

mal trading in cement shares is expected to be resumed Sunday.

The government last month decided to suspend trading in JCFC shares to facilitate negotiations with foreign investors willing to buy part of its stake in the company.

"The direct impact was not that powerful Saturday, but I believe that deal will have its effect today and in the coming few days especially on the shares of mining firms," the broker, who asked not to be named, told the Jordan Times.

According to the bro-

ker there were "rumours" of unofficial sales concluded outside the AFM. "This is considered illegal by AFM regulations since trading on cement shares is suspended."

"I believe that these deals will be officially carried out tomorrow when trading on the JCFC's shares is resumed," the broker said.

He noted that the price of the JCFC share, which stands officially at the rate of JD1,800, ranged between JD1,800 and JD2,500 during the "illegal trading."

"The cement deal will restore foreign investors' confidence in the market, especially those who decided to liquidate their assets in the stock market. Many will consider returning to the market very soon," the broker said.

"It will also give strong impetus to the privatisation process in the country," he added.

The AFM's daily bulletin showed that the turnover amounted to JD72.4 million, where the bulk of this figures was due to the sale of the government stake in the JCFC.

The general price

index, based on the shares of 60 firms, rose by almost one point to reach 160.16 point, up from 159.46 in the past week.

The news about the deal put the shares of mining companies in the limelight, especially the phosphate company which closed at JD1,130, a rise of 0.05 per cent.

Out of the 44 firms that were traded in the market, shares of 26 recorded increase in their prices, six registered declines while 11 remained unchanged, the bulletin showed.

## Eight top Japanese banks ask for \$34 billion lifeline

**TOKYO (AFP)** — Eight of the top Japanese commercial banks will together ask for up to 4,100 billion yen (\$34 billion) in public funds to help write off bad loans, according to bank plans revealed by Friday.

Many top banks warned they will fall into losses for the second year in a row as they struggle to clean out their snowballing bad debt.

Only the giant Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd. has not said it will ask for an injection of taxpayers' money, preferring to raise money from its allies and sell off assets.

Pressure has mounted on the banks to bow to the inevitable and take public money, agreeing at the same time to slice staff numbers and shut branches.

Japan's bank reforms, finally enacted last month after weeks of delay, set aside a huge 60 trillion yen fund of public money and encouraged banks to voluntarily ask for cash to help them prop up their capital.

U.S. President Bill Clinton drilled the point home during his visit to Tokyo.

"I believe it is clearly not only in the interest of the world and the region, but in the interest of the Japanese people for Japan to continue to move forward... with aggressive implementation of the significant bank reform legislation," he told a press conference.

"There is no substitute for decisive action to heal an ailing banking system so that growth can be restored," he

said. Analysts said some banks had been too cautious in their demands for money.

"For those where they have not really done very much to deal with the loans they have a problem," said Brian Waterhouse, senior analyst at HSBC Securities. "This is not a contribution, not a solution to the problem."

Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Japan's largest bank, said it will write off 550 billion yen in bad loans this year, taking a 30 billion yen group net loss.

Rather than ask for public money the bank will sell part of its stake in Union Bank of California for \$750 million and raise money through a share issue.

"We believe it is our most urgent task to aggressively write off bad loans and to strengthen our financial base, and we are going to issue preferred shares as part of financial strengthening measures," the bank said.

It will also cut 3,000 jobs, a sixth of its workforce, in the next three years.

Sumitomo Bank Ltd., Japan's second largest bank, said it would take a heavy 350 billion yen group pre-tax loss for the full year and would clean out 620 billion yen in bad loans.

Sakura Bank Ltd. said it would suffer a parent pre-tax loss of 620 billion yen in the full year to next March and would write off a huge 910 billion yen in bad loans.

The bank will raise 350 billion yen in a share placement with business allies, although Toyota Motor

Corp., a crucial ally the bank had been relying on to lend it money, was not involved in the placement.

"I don't think Toyota's move this time had anything to do with the level of our restructuring plans, but it was due to uncertainty about public fund injections in the bank," said Sakura's Managing Director Hirokazu Ishikawa.

He said they were still expecting a capital injection from Toyota in the future.

Fuji Bank Ltd., one of Japan's weaker banks, said it will ask for the largest slice of taxpayers' money, up to 700 billion yen.

The bank will write off 450 billion yen in bad loans for the full year, and take a heavy 550 billion yen group pre-tax loss.

Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd., one of the healthier Japanese lenders, said it would write off 300 billion yen in bad loans this year and take a group net profit of just 15 billion yen.

Asahi Bank Ltd. said it would write off 400 billion yen in bad loans and slump into the red for the full year with a 200 billion yen group pre-tax loss.

Tokai Bank Ltd. said it would take a group pre-tax loss of 380 billion yen in the year, after writing off 158.1 billion yen in bad loans in the first half.

Sanwa Bank Ltd. and Daiwa Bank Ltd. pledged Thursday to apply for lifeline injections of public money worth a combined 900 billion yen.

A.F.M. TRADE Saturday, 21-11-98

ACCESS 4646868

Company	Open Price	Close Price	Change
<b>BANKS</b>			
AB	204,000	204,250	+0.12%
ONB	1,520	1,530	+0.66%
BOJ	1,070	1,070	0.00%
MEIB	0,970	0,970	0.00%
IBB	1,420	1,420	0.00%
HB	2,700	2,710	+0.37%
KBS	1,680	1,700	+1.19%
JGB	0,690	0,690	0.00%
JIB	1,540	1,590	+3.25%
UBI	0,900	0,860	-4.44%
ABC	2,250	2,350	+4.44%
PIS	0,570	0,560	-1.75%
<b>BANKS INDEX</b>	269,110		+0.44%
<b>INSURANCE</b>			
ASI	0,820	0,880	+7.26%
GAI	2,040	2,045	+0.24%
PI	2,050	2,100	+2.44%
<b>INSURANCE INDEX</b>	125,720		+0.17%
<b>SERVICES</b>			
JEPGO	1,420	1,440	+1.41%
IBGE	1,530	1,500	-1.96%
JTC	0,760	0,770	+1.32%
AZEI	0,810	0,820	+1.23%
UOLT	1,080	1,090	+0.93%
<b>SERVICES INDEX</b>	102,210		+0.30%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>			
JPMC	1,080	1,130	+4.63%
AP	3,180	3,180	0.00%
JPRC	10,200	10,200	0.00%
JCA	1,020	1,000	-1.96%
JPR	2,510	2,540	+1.20%
JF	2,380	2,800	+17.23%
JCC	1,100	1,110	+0.91%
DAR A TAWA	1,970	1,900	-3.55%
INDEF	0,520	0,520	0.00%
J	0,950	0,950	0.00%
NCI	1,220	1,200	-1.64%
LI	0,370	0,380	+2.71%
ICI	0,290	0,300	+3.45%
UCI	0,890	1,000	+12.36%
JIC	3,200	3,200	0.00%
MCWMC	0,640	0,670	+4.69%
JIS	1,100	1,100	0.00%
ACPC	1,160	1,180	+1.72%
EL ZAY	1,070	1,050	-1.87%
UMI	0,590	0,590	0.00%
JIR	0,370	0,380	+2.71%
JNC	0,600	0,590	-1.67%
JNAI	0,670	0,680	+1.49%
<b>INDUSTRY INDEX</b>	58,880		+0.47%
<b>PARALLEL</b>			
UTC	0,610	0,640	+4.92%
AL EKBAI	0,740	0,740	0.00%
API	0,530	0,550	+3.77%
DAWILYAH	0,560	0,560	0.00%
AIT	0,200	0,210	+5.00%
OPTICAL HEARING	0,330	0,320	-3.03%
NAMICO	0,240	0,240	0.00%
MEPCISO	0,500	0,530	+6.00%
AL	2,250	2,250	0.00%
AL RAZI	0,550	0,550	0.00%
AL	0,210	0,210	0.00%
ICI	0,310	0,320	+3.23%
PEARL	0,280	0,290	+3.57%
ALP	3,400	3,420	+0.59%
NUTRI DAR	0,550	0,580	+5.45%
<b>GRAND INDEX</b>	160,16		+0.44%

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## Black night for France as Davenport, Hingis go through

NEW YORK (AFP) — World No. 1 Lindsay Davenport of the United States reached a semi-final showdown with Germany's Steffi Graf at the WTA Tour Chase Championships Friday when she overcame eighth-seeded Nathalie Tauziat of France 6-0, 6-3 in just 54 minutes.

And Switzerland's 18-year-old Martina Hingis made it a black night for French hopes when she saw Tauziat's hard-hitting compatriot Mary Pierce 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

Hingis will face Irina Spirlea of Romania for the other berth in Sunday's final.

Davenport, who has now beaten Tauziat 11 times in their 14 meetings, raced through the first set in a mere 19 minutes — the French player winning only nine points.

Dominating the rallies from the baseline and keeping Tauziat at full stretch with deadly accurate double-fisted backhands, Davenport chalked up the first eight games before the French player managed to get off the mark.

Tauziat, who put only 45 per cent of her first serves into play, squandered the only two chances she had to break Davenport's serve in the second set and she looked shell-shocked when she walked off court.

"I haven't any excuses, I felt confident when I came out but I was never able to get into it. Perhaps it was just one match too many at the end of a long season. I was too slow and was under pressure throughout."



No. 1 seed Lindsay Davenport of the U.S. hits a backhand return to No. 8 seed Nathalie Tauziat of France during their quarterfinal match at the Chase Championships at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Davenport beat Tauziat 6-0, 6-3 (AFP photo)

Davenport, who has won six tournaments this season including the U.S. Open, is assured of finishing the season as the World No. 1, whatever the result of her match against Graf.

The German player, who has been staging a comeback after a wrist injury, reached the last four 24 hours earlier when she defeated her old rival Monica Seles 1-6, 6-4, 6-4.

The former World No. 1, who has won the last two tournaments she has entered, has chalked up 12 consecutive matches since

her return. Hingis, who had never beaten Pierce indoors, needed 97 minutes to clinch her victory in a hard-fought match in which both players opened their shoulders and went for their strokes.

The first set featured two service breaks by each player and it was finally decided by a tie-break — Hingis surging back after being 1-3 down.

In the second set both players held their service games until Hingis finally made a break in a dramatic

tenth game in which Pierce let slip a 40-15 lead and lost the last four points of the match to unforced errors.

Pierce needed a visit from the trainer before the match started, another after the fifth game and a bathroom break after the seventh game of the second.

Hingis, who has won four titles this season (but none since the Italian Open in May) delighted the crowd by knocking up with one of the ballboys during Pierce's absence.

## London presents 2003 World Championships bid

MONACO (R) — British athletics chief David Hemery formally presented London's bid for the world 2003 championships to International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) president Primo Nebiolo on Saturday.

Hemery, who was elected as president of Athletics U.K. last Monday, met Nebiolo at the IAAF's headquarters in Monaco.

If the British bid succeeds the championships will be held at the rebuilt national stadium at Wembley.

The bid has been supported by British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Next year's world championships will be held in Seville, Spain, while the 2001 competition was awarded last Thursday to Edmonton, Canada.

The IAAF council will decide on the venue for the 2003 championships at a council meeting in Seville next May. Paris and Stanford, California, are the other likely candidates.



Andre Agassi

## Fans welcome back Agassi for season's finale

HANOVER (R) — With no Boris Becker to cheer this year, it is likely the fans at this week's ATP Tour world championship will make Andre Agassi their favourite.

German hero Becker, who won the season-ending event for the world's top eight players in 1992 and 1995, is now semi-retired and has dropped out of the top 20.

But Agassi, who was nowhere to be seen this time last year, is back in Hanover and can count on the crowd's support.

After an awful 1997 season which saw him slump to 141st in the rankings, the American is back in the top five for the first time in more than two years.

Once the enfant terrible of the tennis world, Agassi, now 28, has re-discovered his appetite for the game and recaptured his best form.

"It was a straight decision to work hard and take every opportunity," he said of his amazing comeback in an interview released on the ATP Tour's website. "The difficult part is staying with it."

Currently fourth on the ATP Tour list, he could jump a couple of places

with a good performance in the northern German city. "I am not interested in the number one ranking right now as much as proving that I can be there," said the former World No. 1, who was 122nd during the week of Hanover last year.

"I want to win big tournaments, that is the most important thing for me." While Pete Sampras was cruising to victory here a year ago, Agassi was sweating on the unglamorous Challenger circuit in the United States.

"I remember playing in Las Vegas and Burbank," he said.

"They were great weeks, they really were. During a difficult time for me, I got a lot of support."

The year-end tournament brings back sweet memories to Agassi, who was a young star when he won it in 1990, beating Stefan Edberg in the final.

The event, formerly known as the Masters, had just moved from New York to Frankfurt and was given its current name that year.

"It is an opportunity to play the best players and finish with an accomplishment," Agassi said shortly

before making the trip to Hanover, where the ATP Tour world championship has been staged since 1996.

The American, who won five tournaments out of 10 finals this season, said he was surprised how fast he had made his way back to the top.

"I knew it would take me the whole year to get myself back in a good position again but I wasn't expecting to have succeeded this quickly," he said.

While displaying his aggressive baseline play of old on many courts this year, he did not quite make it when it mattered most, failing to go beyond the fourth round in any of the big four.

"The real belief about beating the best guys just now coming around," said Agassi, who will be seeded third in Hanover in the absence of injured World No. 3 Patrick Rafter.

## WORLD VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS Netherlands beat U.S. for 3rd straight win

CHIBA (AFP) — Olympic champions the Netherlands shrugged off a shaky start Saturday to beat the United States for their third straight win at the men's world volleyball championships.

The Dutch spikers, the runners-up in the 1994 championships, lapsed into making errors to go down 2-10 in the first set — from where they stormed back to score a 15-12, 15-6, 15-11 victory.

"When the Americans were leading 10-2 after unforced errors on our side, they gave us some air and then we were alive again," said Dutch head coach Toon Gerbrands after the 89-minute match.

"It was also a special game for me, because Douglas Beal (American coach) came to Holland when I was still a very young coach. I learned a lot from him at the time and this was the first time I had coached against him."

"It was a honour to play against one of the best coaches in the world."

The Dutch team, who had to be satisfied with the silver medals in the 1995 World Cup and the Barcelona Olympics, had to fight without middle-blocker Albert Cristina.

Cristina returned home because his girlfriend, former national team player Aafke Hamant, is due to give birth over the next few days.

Atlanta Olympic bronze medalists Yugoslavia and fourth place finishers Russia also chalked up their third straight wins in the eight-team Group H round robin in Chiba, on eastern outskirts of Tokyo.

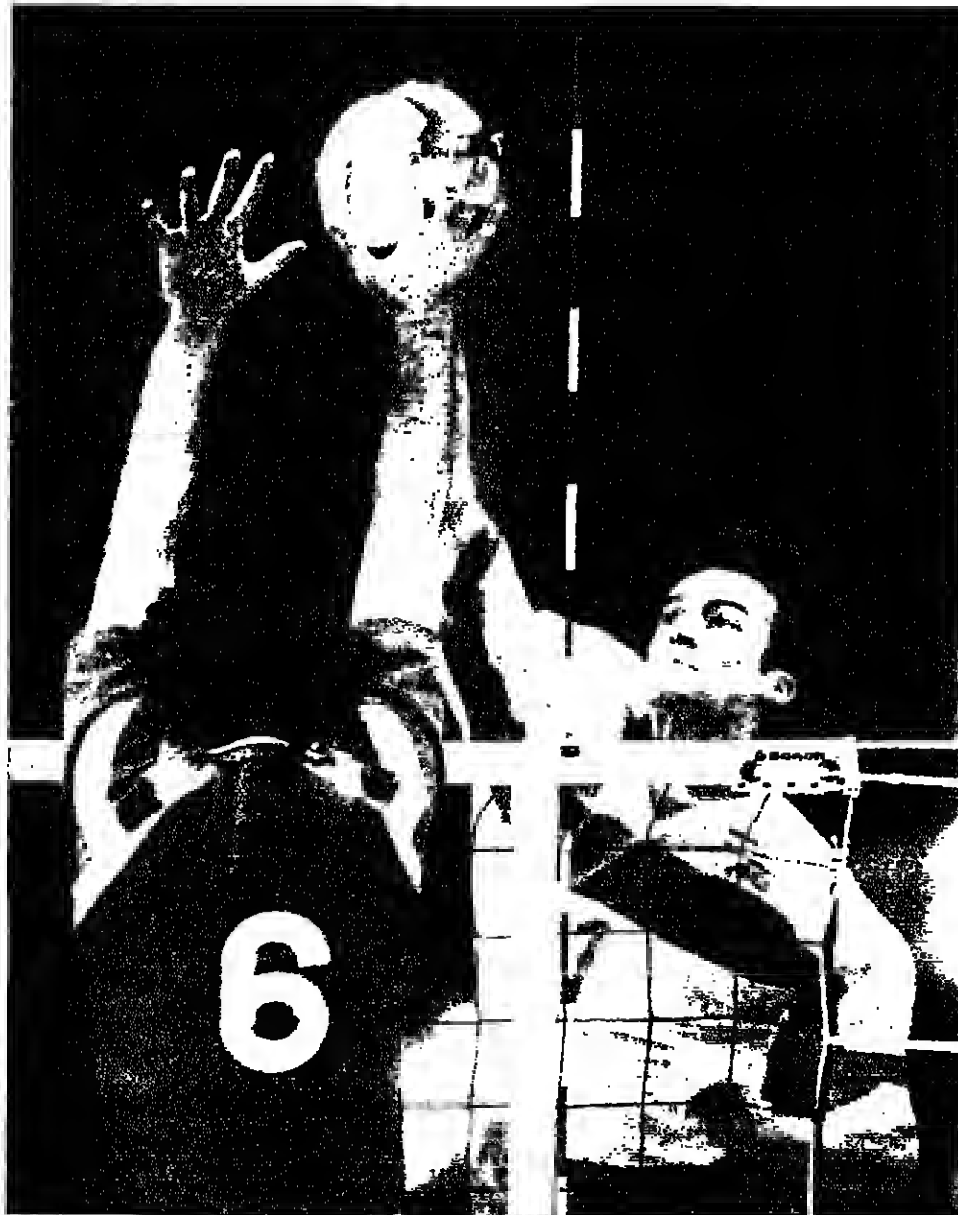
Yugoslavia needed just over one hour to beat Ukraine 15-9, 15-10, 15-1, while Russia downed Greece 12-15, 15-6, 15-11, 15-6.

"It is important to win 3-0, but it's even more important to increase our game level match by match. I'm satisfied that we made only five mistakes," said Yugoslav coach Zoran Gajic.

Russian coach Guennadi Chipouline was not satisfied, saying: "My players did not play at their best level and we couldn't perform in our usual style. In the future, each player must maximise his game."

In Group G in Hiroshima, western Japan, Cuba and Spain remained unbeaten with a third consecutive win each. Cuba breezed past South Korea 15-13, 15-9, 15-7, while Spain outplayed Bulgaria 17-15, 15-4, 15-11.

Canada posted their first win in the second round when they defeated Argentina 15-11, 10-15, 15-4, 15-6.



Spanish ace spiker Rafael Pascual (R) blasts away at a Bulgarian defender Ivaylo Stefanov (L) during their third match of the Pool-G quarterfinal-round at the men's World Volleyball Championships in Hiroshima Green Arena. Spain beat Bulgaria 17-15, 15-4, 15-11 with in one hour 43 minutes (AFP photo)

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## LOCAL SPORTS SCENE



## Sports facilities to be named after Nazmi Al Saeed

AMMAN — HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Saturday called for commemorating the memory of the late Nazmi Al Saeed, one of Jordan's sports pioneers who past away last week. The Prince suggested establishing a series of projects in his name, granting scholarships for excellent athletes and naming sport facilities after Al Saeed's name.

## Faisali to visit Palestinian territories

AMMAN — The Kingdom's 1998 Jordan Cup Champions Al Faisali will be heading to the Palestinian territories for a series of friendly matches Dec. 4-16. The team will be visiting Hebron, Jericho, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Nablus and Gaza to hold five matches with Palestinian clubs.

## Cycling team to leave for Egypt

AMMAN — The national cycling team will soon leave to Cairo to hold a two-week training camp Dec. 5-12 with its Egyptian counterpart. The team will include ten cyclists.

## Equestrian team trains in Wadi Rum

AMMAN — The national equestrian team are currently training in Wadi Rum in preparation for the World Endurance Race which will be held in the UAE Dec. 9-10. Jordan will have six participants in the 160km race.

## Swimming federation to cover pool

AMMAN — The Jordan Swimming Federation has undertaken a fund-raising campaign to cover the Olympic swimming pool currently under construction. The JSF will also ask the 9th Pan-Arab Games Construction Committee to provide the project with facilities needed for swimming, water polo and diving.

Compiled by Ahmad Khatib



Marco Simone (R) striker and captain of Paris Saint-Germain fights for the ball with Rennes player David Sommeil, at the Parc-des-Princes in Paris, during their French D1 championship match. PSG won 2-1 (AFP photo)

## Pete wants record, more respect

HANOVER (R) — Pete Sampras, arguably the finest tennis player of all time, at times feels he does not get all the credit he deserves.

To make the world really take notice, American Sampras wants to use next week's ATP Tour world championship to end the year as number one for a record sixth consecutive time.

He faces a stiff challenge from Chilean World No. 2 Marcelo Rios, a mere 33 points behind him before the season-ending event for the world's top eight players which starts on Tuesday in Hanover.

Whoever fares best at the \$3.5 million indoor event will finish 1998 on top.

Sampras has won in the northern German city four times already, most recently last year to end the season as number one for the fifth time in a row, tying the record set by Jimmy Connors from 1974 to 1978.

"Even in Europe, it wasn't really talked about," Sampras complained. "It's disappointing because it's one of the toughest things to do in sport."

In the United States, it was even worse.

"Americans expect me to win every match I play," he said. "That's the way it has gone for years."

The main reason why the gifted 27-year-old, who was

voted the No. 1 player of the last 25 years by a panel of experts last year, does not draw that much attention is probably because he is so dominant.

"For so long, people have just taken what I have done for granted," he said late last month in Stuttgart. "To win grand slams year in, year out and to be the number one is not an easy thing to do."

Sampras retained his Wimbledon crown this year, winning his 11th grand slam title to move within reach of the record set by Australian Roy Emerson with 12.

But, partly because of persistent injury worries, he has not looked quite as awesome as in previous seasons and even lost the No. 1 ranking to Rios for two brief periods.

So obsessed is Sampras with the record that he decided to spend six successive weeks in Europe playing indoor tournaments, something he had not done since 1993.

"I'll do whatever it takes to do it because I think it's definitely up there with the greatest achievements in tennis," he said in Stuttgart. "I don't think it will ever be broken."

Last week in Stockholm, Sampras appeared to have undermined his chances when he lost to Australian Jason Stolteberg in the first round.

Rios was playing in

Santiago and would have knocked Sampras off his perch if he had won there. But he fell in the quarter-finals to little-known Juan Antonio Marin of Costa Rica.

During the couple of weeks before Stockholm, Sampras had looked close to his brilliant best, reaching the semi-finals in Stuttgart and the final at the Paris Open.

"Everybody knew it was going to come down to Hanover, because that's where the majority of the points are," he said.

The perfect scenario for the ATP Tour world championship would obviously be a final between Sampras and Rios with the top ranking as a reward for the winner.

Oddly enough, the man who could spoil Sampras' dream has not played against him for more than four years.

Their last match was at the 1994 French Open. Sampras won it 7-6 7-6 6-4.

## Progress seen in talks to end NBA lockout

NEW YORK (R) — Both sides in the NBA lockout said there was progress in a long day of talks on Friday.

"There was evidence of progress today. Both sides moved off their previous positions," NBA Commissioner David Stern said after more than 12 hours of meetings and negotiations on how to divide up league revenues — about \$2 billion last season.

"We obviously, to some extent, modified our respective positions," said Billy Hunter, executive director of the NBA Players Association. "We want to have a season, we don't want to see the season go up in smoke."

"We know there's a certain period of time we have if we're going to have a season. We also want to minimize the damage, the downside."

"I think what we can say for the first time is we feel we had a productive day," said NBA deputy commissioner Russ Granik. "Unfortunately, we are still far apart on a lot of issues, but I think we did make some progress, we got closer together on some of the key issues."

No specifics were given. The owners had previously asked for a 50-50 split while

the players had proposed they get 60 per cent of the league's so-called basketball-related income — revenues from television, ticket sales and merchandise.

Last season, according to the league, 57 per cent of basketball-related income went to salaries, well above the 52 per cent trigger that allowed the owners to reopen the collective bargaining agreement.

"I don't want to go into specifics that were discussed but the atmosphere was better, definitely," Hunter said after the meetings at a midtown Manhattan hotel, also attended by players including union president Patrick Ewing and lawyers for both sides.

"Both sides reached out to each other on issues that had been hardened," said Stern. "We also discussed other issues that had not been touched upon. However, there are major differences on many items and we are far apart on those."

The ever-increasing threat of losing the entire 1998-99 season spurred the talks, both sides agreed.

"There's a slogan. 'The sight of the guillotine improves your hearing,'" said Stern. "And I guess

maybe we're hearing each other a little better because the guillotine's being sharpened."

"It's too bad it has to come to this. But I would characterize that we had for us a productive, cordial meeting."

Friday's bargaining session to end the lockout declared on July 1 was the first since October 28. No further talks were set for the weekend and no date was set for resuming them, but Granik said next week's Thanksgiving holiday should not stand in the way.

"We kind of recognised that trying to make this deal as soon as we can possibly make it is probably more important than any other obligation any of us have," the league deputy commissioner said. "It's not going to be the schedule that hurts us."

The 53rd NBA season was to begin November 3, but the league already has wiped out 194 games through the end of the month, the first cancellations in league history. Even if an accord were reached this weekend, it would take about a month for teams to sign players and complete training camps.

## Austria's Eberharter wins World Cup giant slalom race

PARK CITY (AFP) — Olympic runner-up Stephan Eberharter of Austria won Friday's men's alpine World Cup giant slalom race after a "wicked" turn dubbed "Gotcha" foiled his fellow Nagano medal winners.

Eberharter, whose only prior World Cup victory came last March in a giant slalom at Crans Montana, won here Friday in 2mins 14.75secs — 52-hundredths of a second ahead of compatriot Christian Mayer.

Back problems that surfaced last week bothered Eberharter between Friday's runs. But he made a spectac-

ular second descent in 1:07.38 to clinch victory.

"It was not easy," Eberharter admitted.

"I had problems with my back. We were working too it between runs and it was hard for me to bend. At the start you get this adrenaline. That helped me."

Dropped from the Austrian team for five years, Eberharter, who finished third in the World Cup overall last season, has returned with a vengeance.

"After so many years in a big hole, it's good to be out now and in the sunshine," Eberharter said.

"Last year was great. To win the silver medal (at Nagano) was a moment I will never forget."

A tricky gate on a dip of the hill for the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Games proved the undoing of reigning Olympic and World Cup champion Hermann Maier of Austria as well as Nagano bronze medalist Michael von Gernig.

Maier, the defending champion here, won last month's World Cup opener in his homeland by 1.60secs over second-place Eberharter and led here after an opening run of 1:07.02.

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## Iraqi Kurdish leader meets Assad in 1st visit in 2 years

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani held talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad here Saturday on his first visit to Damascus in two years.

The leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of the two main rival factions in northern Iraq, informed the Syrian president of the "details of the contacts which he had with certain foreign parties," the official Syrian news agency SANA reported.

Talabani's visit to Damascus comes just after a visit to Ankara where he assured Turkish officials the PUK is not seeking to establish a breakaway Kurdish state in northern Iraq and will not assist Kurdish rebels in southeastern Turkey.

Syria signed a security accord with Turkey last

month undertaking not to allow the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) to use its territory for "the supply of weapons, logistical material, financial support and propaganda activities" in its long-running rebellion against Ankara.

The accord followed threats of military action by Turkey.

The PUK leader also discussed with Assad "recent developments in the region," SANA said without elaborating.

Talabani has held four meetings with Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam since his arrival here Nov. 11, the PUK's Damascus representative told AFP.

Dana Magid said Talabani discussed with Khaddam the "details of the agreement which he reached in Washington in September

with Massoud Barzani," the head of the rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

The two men also discussed "the situation in Iraq," he said.

The power-sharing agreement the PUK signed with the KDP sparked concern in Ankara that the agreement was the first step in the creation of an independent Kurdistan on its southeastern border.

But Talabani assured Turkish officials that the agreement obliged the PUK to prevent PKK rebels from using rear bases in northern Iraq in its longstanding rebellion in southeastern Turkey.

The KDP has helped Ankara combat the PKK in northern Iraq since May 1997, but Turkey has regularly accused the PUK of backing the rebels.

## Israel retracts claim of killing 3 Amal fighters

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli army on Saturday retracted its claim that it had killed three members of the Shiite Amal resistance movement in southern Lebanon the day before.

"The claim was erroneous," a military spokesman said.

On Friday the army said it had killed three Amal members in an air raid near

Qabirha in the central section of the Israeli-occupied zone in south Lebanon.

Amal had denied that any of its fighters had been killed.

"All our fighters who took part in clashes with the Israeli occupier Friday returned to their bases safe and sound," the movement said in a statement issued in Beirut.

## Jordan, Syria open water sharing talks

(Continued from page 1)

"The Kingdom does not have the capability to store water in great quantities and treat it. Thus, any talks on water must focus on the quality of water coming to the country," Salameh said.

The river, which provides Jordan with 135 mcm of water a year, begins in Syria, flows along the Syrian-Jordanian border and then joins the Jordan River downstream from Lake Tiberias.

Israel agreed to give the Kingdom over 200 mcm of water annually, mostly from the Yarmouk River, under the 1994 peace treaty.

Last month, Jordan and Israel began construction

of a JD1.65 million diversion wall to more effectively utilise 40 mcm of the Yarmouk River's overflow per year and regulate a year-round inflow of water to the 110-kilometre-long King Abdullah Canal. The government said such a project would not negate the partnership with Syria regarding the planned dam.

According to official Jordanian figures, the country's population, increasing by 3.5 per cent annually, will need 1.2 billion cubic metres of water per year between 1998 and 2000. But the Kingdom's current water resources provide only 960 mcm a year.

## Turkey steps up attack

(Continued from page 1)

A nurse at the Coniugi Bernardini Hospital south of Rome where Ocalan had been staying told Reuters he was escorted out of the building through a side entrance at 5.00 a.m. local time.

Turkey in late summer pressured Syria into expelling Ocalan from his hideout there and he fled via Moscow to Rome.

The current row has driven a wedge between NATO allies Italy and Turkey and has also hurt Turkey in Europe. Washington has supported Turkey in the dispute.

Austrian Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel backed Italy on Saturday in the standoff and said threats must be avoided.

"Any undue pressure on the Italian government, including unilateral threats, is inappropriate and must be avoided," Schuessel said.

But in Istanbul, Turkey's Foreign Minister Ismail Cem joined his country's verbal attack.

"Most importantly we are warning the Italian people. The emergence of terrorism in an Italian stage show is bad for Italy, bad for Europe and bad for the world," he said.

Kurds from across Europe continued their protest in support of Ocalan outside

Rome's Celio military hospital, where they initially believed he was being held following his arrest at the city's Fiumicino airport last week.

Some 600 Kurds huddled in front of makeshift fires, lit inside oil drums. Many wore white T-shirts emblazoned with "hunger strike" over brightly coloured traditional costumes.

Belgian police arrested 30 demonstrators on Saturday during a protest by Turkish immigrants over Ocalan.

Many Turks were outraged by Italy's refusal to hand over the guerrilla leader. In Istanbul, some 300 protesters chanted anti-PKK slogans as an effigy of Ocalan, hung from a scaffold, was set ablaze.

The dispute also triggered street fights in Turkey between Turkish and Kurdish protesters and political leaders called on the public not to respond to provocations.

Security officials on Saturday said two Kurds had died in police custody after being detained in a nationwide crackdown on Turkey's main legal Kurdish party.

A Turkish boycott of Italian goods was gathering pace.

Defence Minister Ismet Sezgin said Ankara may reevaluate the two countries' defence industry cooperation.

## 2 Kurds die in Turkish custody

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Two Kurds died in police custody after being detained in a nationwide crackdown on Turkey's main legal Kurdish party, security officials said on Saturday.

Officials in the main southeastern city of Diyarbakir said 18-year-old Halit Cakir had died of a heart attack shortly after being detained by police in the local offices of the People's Democracy Party (HADEP).

Separately, the governor of Kocaeli in western Turkey said 46-year-old Metin Yurtsever died overnight in police custody, Anatolian news agency reported.

Turkish officials denied any wrongdoing, but HADEP officials said police were at fault in the death of both men.

"The man in Kocaeli died after being beaten by nationalist protesters, while the man in Diyarbakir died after being tortured in police custody," a HADEP official in Istanbul told Reuters.

Security forces have detained at least 600 HADEP supporters in a week of raids sparked by the arrest of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan in Italy last week.

Initial Turkish elation at the arrest of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) chief Ocalan in Rome turned to anger after Italy dismissed Turkish demands to extradite him.

Far right groups chanting anti-PKK slogans have staged violent protests outside the offices of HADEP and the Human Rights Association, both of which advocate a peaceful solution to the guerrilla conflict in southeast Turkey.

Turkey holds Ocalan and his PKK responsible for the deaths of more than 29,000 people in 14 years of conflict in the mainly Kurdish south-east, where the PKK seeks self-rule.

## Lebanon hopes President 'Clean' will wipe out corruption

BEIRUT (AFP) — President-elect Emile Lahoud, due to be sworn in on Nov. 24, is expected to declare war on the corruption that is so widespread in Lebanon that even World Bank experts have decried it.

The Lebanese seem eager for Lahoud, also known as "Mr. Clean," to launch reforms to fight political graft and end the era of impunity stretching back to the 1975-1990 civil war.

World Bank experts charged that corruption spreads in Lebanon "quicker than in any other place in the world... and is worse than Indonesia under Suharto."

"Everyone knows that there is corruption in the administration and that there are rigged tenders," for the multi-million-dollar post-war reconstruction projects, a foreign diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

U.S. Commerce Secretary William Daley, during a visit to Lebanon on Nov. 13, insisted on being "frank... [because] when American companies bid on projects, whether they win or lose, they expect the bidding process to be transparent and fair."

Lahoud, on the day of his election as president by parliament on Oct. 15, pledged to rid the country of corruption, starting at the top.

On Nov. 4, the Lebanese cabinet approved an "illicit wealth" bill ordering top officials to reveal their fortunes, and scrapping official immunity in a bid to stamp out high-level government corruption. The bill still awaits final approval by parliament.

Examples of corruption in Lebanon abound in recent years.

Minister of the Displaced Walid Jumblatt, who repeatedly denounced the "sharks" in power

in Lebanon, admitted on a live television program that his own companies maintain double accounts.

"Legally, he had a case to answer, but nothing happened," a lawyer said.

A new media law was introduced at the end of 1996, granting official licences to radio and television networks to a restricted number of top Lebanese officials.

A May 1997 report on illegal coastal constructions prepared by the ministry of transportation, mentioned entrepreneur and Interior Minister Michel Murr, the brother and wife of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. House Speaker Nabih Berri and several MPs.

In October 1996, about \$2.5 million in fiscal stamps were stolen from the finance ministry. The body of a high-ranking official from the ministry was found weeks later in a barrel of acid.

Last September, a Lebanese ambassador admitted before a disciplinary council that he "borrowed" \$440,000 between 1990 and 1994.

The public administration and government agencies themselves remain bloated with employees because of the country's religious quota system.

"For example, the deficit problem faced by the national carrier Middle East Airlines [MEA] can be summed up in two figures: 10 aeroplanes to 4,000 employees," said a foreign economist.

Maverick MP Najah Wakim, who has been leading an anti-corruption crusade for years, recently published a book entitled "The Black Hands." The book, which continues to be a bestseller on its ninth edition, denounces corruption by officials up to the prime minister.



PRO-OCALAN RALLY: Young Kurdish women living in Germany carry a banner showing leader of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, during a demonstration in central Hamburg, northern Germany, on Saturday. Hundreds of Kurds took part in the rally for Ocalan who has been wanted in Germany on charge of terrorism since 1990. Ocalan was arrested earlier this month in Rome (AP photo)

## Turkish prime minister attacks moves to topple government

ANKARA (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz on Saturday attacked moves to topple his government as potentially damaging to the country while it is embroiled in a diplomatic

standstill. In a speech lauding his coalition's success, Yilmaz bemoaned the likelihood of defeat in Wednesday's election, which has diverted attention away from efforts to extradite Kurdish guerrilla chief Abdullah Ocalan from Italy.

"The only ones to benefit from this government going will be criminal gangs, profiteers, smugglers and terrorists. They are all celebrating now," he told members of his Motherland Party at a major congress in Ankara.

Some 10,000 party members gave Yilmaz a noisy

standing ovation as he vowed that Motherland, currently allied with two smaller parties, would win power alone in early elections set for next April.

The party reelected Yilmaz chairman in an uncontested vote.

He has led the party since 1991.

"We must establish a new Turkey or our country and people will be returned to the dark days of conflict, gangs, terrorism and uncertainty," he said.

The European Union on Saturday backed Italy in the dispute over Ocalan, dealing another blow to Turkish efforts to try him on treason charges in Turkey.

Ankara was infuriated by an Italian court ruling on Friday overruling its warrant to arrest the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) leader.

held responsible by Turkey for the death of more than 29,000 people in a 14-year-old separatist conflict.

The dispute piled further problems on the coalition, which was deserted last week by a key left-wing powerbroker after allegations of high-level corruption initiated steps to topple Turkey's fifth government in three years.

A cabinet spokesman has acknowledged that the government's days are numbered but said Yilmaz would stay in office until the confidence vote.

Yilmaz on Saturday championed his government's achievements since coming to power 16 months ago in place of an Islamist-led coalition which was edged out of power by the secularist establishment.

He said the government

could claim credit for cutting annual inflation from triple digits at the start of 1998 to 76.6 per cent in October. The coalition had also pushed through important education and tax reforms, and accelerated Turkey's long-stalled privatisation process.

If the government falls, analysts expect President Suleyman Demirel to appoint a caretaker prime minister in a broad coalition to take the country into the elections.

No clear alternative to Yilmaz has emerged and a period of uncertainty could boost Motherland ahead of the vote.

The main Islamist opposition has called for the formation of a pre-election coalition that would avoid the personality squabbles that plague Turkish politics.

## Phone sex leads to costly affair

PERTH (R) — An Australian man has been ordered by a magistrate to pay more than \$1,664 for phone sex calls made from a neighbour's house. The man had been charged with two counts of burglary after he allegedly broke into the neighbour's house to use the telephone to make the calls. Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio reported on Saturday. Records show some of the sex line calls lasted 50 minutes. The man was unable to use his own phone, which could only accept incoming calls because of a huge outstanding bill. He was also ordered to complete 240 hours of community service.

## 'Beanie Baby' addict gets six months in jail

MONTEREY (R) — Tamara Dee Maldonado, 25, has been sentenced to six months jail for using stolen credit card numbers to buy \$8,000 worth of "Beanie Baby" toys. Maldonado said she developed a Beanie Baby addiction while working at McDonald's, where she had to pop the bean-bag toys into Happy Meal boxes all day long. "It was like a drug," Maldonado said. "Once I started, I couldn't stop. It was like being addicted." Judge Jonathan Price ordered Maldonado to stay away from Beanie Babies for five years and gave police the right to make spot searches of her home to ensure she was clean.

## Society to protect men founded

MBABANE (R) — Tired of your spouse bossing you around, making you do all the housework or subjecting you to physical abuse? If you are, and you're a man living in the small southern African kingdom of Swaziland, help is on its way. The Swaziland Association of Men (SAM) has been formed to protect males from domestic and other forms of abuse, the organisation said in a statement. The statement said it would provide legal guidance for men who have been "made to work all week, wash dishes, scrub floors, and baby-sit." It said it would also offer help to those who had been raped or beaten by their wives.

## Schwarzenegger to attend governor's swearing-in

ST. PAUL (AP) — An even better-known body will attend inauguration ceremonies for "The Body" — America's latest celebrity-turned-politician, Arnold Schwarzenegger plan to attend the Jan. 4 swearing-in ceremonies for governor-elect Jesse Ventura. Ventura said Thursday that the two dined together last week and Schwarzenegger said "absolutely, positively he was coming to the inauguration." Ventura, a former professional wrestler nicknamed "The Body," appeared with Schwarzenegger, a former Mister Universe, in "Predator" and "The Running Man" in 1987.

## Reeve returns to acting with 'Rear Window'

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — For the first time since a riding accident left him paralysed in May 1995, former "Superman" Christopher Reeve will star in a film, a television remake of Alfred Hitchcock's "Rear Window." In the new Rear Window, to be broadcast Sunday on the U.S. television network ABC, Reeve takes on the role played by James Stewart in 1954 — that of a man confined to a wheelchair who combats boredom by spying on his neighbours, one of whom he believes has committed a murder. This will be the only second time since his accident that Reeve, 46, has put on his actor's hat.

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